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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER
1924



STANLEY WEYMAN'S

NEW ROMANCE

'QUEEN'S FOLLY'

Begins in this number

Full Contents
see Page vii.

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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY

NOVEMBER 1924



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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1924.

QUEEN'S FOLLY.

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE COTTAGE.

MRS. SOUTH's worn hand trembled on the yellowish ivory handle as she gave the teapot a last skilful twirl before she filled the three cups. Ruth's tongue rattled on, and Rachel hung midway, her attention divided between the extravagant fancies that tripped lightly from the child's lips, and the tender fears that brimmed the mother's eyes as often as they rested on her elder daughter. To enter fully into those fears would have needed a longer experience of life than Rachel possessed, seeing that in fact her experience was bounded by the sheltering walls of the thatched fuchsia-clad cottage before which, and barely a hundred yards away, the sea murmured and rippled. But the imminence of the parting that lay before her, and many a waking fear sobered the girl's thoughts, so that, even while she lent a half-willing ear to her sister's rose-coloured tale, her lip trembled in sympathy with her mother's apprehensions. She knew that she was leaving all whom she loved and all whom she knew, and leaving them to enter on a life unknown and untried. She knew that she was looking her last for many a day on the snug lamp-lit room, in which every object, from the kettle bubbling on the hob to the darned table-cloth and the dim oval mirror above the mantel, was familiar to her ; and as her gaze took a slow farewell of each, a hand seemed to clutch her heart. She choked as she tried to swallow.

But youth is the season of hope as of courage, and Rachel had a brave spirit in her slender form. Rather than that her mother should divine the momentary panic that seized her, she would have bitten her tongue. She turned the choke into a laugh, and flirted a crumb at Ruth. 'Oh, silly Ruth !' she said in her elder-sister's voice. 'Conquests and balls, silly child ! Do you think that they come in the way of governesses ? Little goose, I am going out

for forty pounds a year and my coach-fare, and not for conquests. And to sit in my schoolroom with no fire on cold days and correct exercises, and not for balls. Balls, indeed ! I'm lucky, my dear, to get the place, and oh, mother, how it will help me afterwards—to have taught a Lady Ann ! I wonder, shall I have to call her Lady Ann ? Twelve years old and Lady Ann !'

Mrs. South looked her perplexity. 'I'm sure I don't know,' she answered, diverted for the moment from her deeper anxieties. 'I think you should ask Lady Ellingham.'

'Yes, mother, I suppose so.'

'But la !' Ruth exclaimed, 'what fun it will be for you ! To live in a great house with Lord This and Lady That ! Do you think that they will all wear stars on their coats ?'

'My dear, I shall not see them once in a blue moon, and that will be at a mile off. I shall be upstairs with a globe and a black-board and a pile of lesson-books. You may be sure that I shall see little enough of lords and ladies.' And involuntarily Rachel winced as she recalled the terrible, terrible interview with Lady Elisabeth in the Close—the dreadful old lady with the silver-headed cane and the green shade over her sightless eyes, who had engaged her ; who had called her 'the young person' and had discussed her with her waiting-woman as freely and as inhumanly as if she had been a hundred miles away instead of standing, with trembling knees, within a pace of the old lady's high-backed chair. That painful interview had indeed driven Rachel to within an ace of withdrawal. For half an hour she had been minded to withdraw. Then the thought of her mother, and their need, had renewed her courage.

But the memory remained. It had been a wretched ordeal. She might have been a stock or a stone for the little regard that had been paid to her sensibilities.

'How is the young person dressed, Puncheon ?' the old lady had asked.

The waiting-woman had not even looked at her—her trained eye had taken all in at a glance. 'In a tippet and a black bom-bazine with white spots, and a Tuscan trimmed black.'

'No fringes or falbalas ? You are sure of that ?'

'No, my lady, quite plain-like.'

'What sort of an air has she ? Is she respectable ?'

'I should say so, my lady.'

'Handsome ? Likely to take the fellows ? And give trouble ?' For the first time the woman had glanced at the flushed, indignant

face, with a gleam of fellow-feeling, but no spark of humour in her eyes. 'The young lady is not ill-looking, my lady, but quiet-like.'

'Demure, eh? Umph! Nine times out of ten they are the worst. But if she's no beauty she'll not fly above the chaplain, and that's his business. Ellingham is a rip but he has an eye in his head and stoops only at game of a feather. Well, Mr. Dean answers for her French. Where,' and she had poked her cane at the trembling girl, 'did you get your accent, girl? I'm told it's passable.'

'From M. Bourlay, the *émigré*, Madam.'

'Umph! If poor George Selwyn were alive he'd like nothing better than to try her. But,' fumbling in her lap for her gold snuff-box, 'George and his kind are gone. There are no gentlemen now, Puncheon. They went out with wigs and silk stockings. Well, the young person may go. She'll hear from me. It's forty pounds and her coach-fare—d'you hear, Puncheon? And bid her behave herself in her station. But she's young and a woman, and bidding's no more than wind in the grass when a young spark makes a leg. There, let her go. I'm tired.'

A dreadful interview and a terrible old lady! Rachel had gone from it to the Cathedral and had sat an hour, cooling her burning face and stemming the angry tears that would rise to her eyes. And for one-half of that time she had been minded to withdraw her application. But the thought of her mother, and a little also the thought of their good friend the Dean, who had recommended her, had prevailed. She had put the temptation from her, and gradually the unpleasant memory had faded, only to return with unhappy clearness now when it availed only to oppress the fluttering heart with a momentary panic.

But her mother was speaking, and Rachel struggled to control her feelings. 'It's the servants I am afraid of,' Mrs. South said, speaking out of her little store of experience. 'In those great houses they are impudent. You must keep them in their place, my dear, or they will encroach. And you'll never forget, Rachel, that you are the great-grand-niece of Dr. South—Dr. South the divine, my dear. I hope you will never forget that, and tell them if it is necessary. I think they will respect you then.'

'La, mother,' Ruth cried, 'how often you've told us that. I believe you'd like us to go about with a label round our necks: "Great-grand-niece of Dr. South"! I should laugh to death if I saw Rachel with one.'

'My dear, the truth is the truth,' Mrs. South rejoined. 'And where Rachel is going—among strangers—it will not be known. And she will be wise if she lets it be known, so that she may take her proper place. She might tell my lady, or the chaplain perhaps—he would be a proper person.'

Rachel wondered—with a touch of irony, for already she was learning her worldly lesson—what Lady Elisabeth would have said to Dr. South. But she only replied that she would remember.

'And if you are asked down in the evening—as I should expect when the family are alone—you have your white muslin. But you look so young in it that I am not sure after all that it will be wise. And as to caps, you need not have taken to them for the next five years, seeing you are only nineteen turned, but in your position it may be expected. You had better ask the Countess.'

'I will, mother.'

'She'll be kind to you, I hope. I hear she is young, but you must not expect too much. And, oh dear, I wish someone was going with you. I think after all,' she added nervously, 'I had better come with you.'

'And spend all that money, mother!' Rachel was stout about it. 'And have to come back alone! No, indeed, ma'am. You know the coach always makes you ill. And M. Bourlay is to meet me at Exeter and see me into the coach, and after that there is but the one change at Salisbury. Oh, I shall do very well, I assure you.'

'And you'll write at once. I shall not have a happy moment until I hear from you.'

'Indeed I will. And perhaps Lady Ellingham will give me a frank so that it will cost you nothing.'

'And you'll tell us everything? If the child sleeps in your room, and what your hours are?'

'And what Lady Ellingham wears,' Ruth put in eagerly. 'And what company they have. And be sure to tell me if Lord Ellingham wears his star. Oh! what a letter we shall have, mother! And don't forget to tell us when you wear your white muslin, and which sash with it. La, Rachel, I would like to see you primming it about in your cap, as if you were an old maid! I'll be bound you'll look as mild as a mouse.'

Rachel's thoughts strayed for a moment to the white muslin, and, if the truth be told, drew some comfort from the contemplation

of it and of the blue and the black sash that went with it. And the caps might be premature, but as tried on before her tiny glass upstairs they had seemed not unbecoming. Then the strange folk among whom she was going? They could not be all forbidding and rude like Lady Elisabeth. They could not be all old and inhuman. Lady Ellingham was young and might be kind.

So she tried, and not in vain, to rally her spirits. But the last evening, and that half spent! Her lip trembled in spite of all her efforts. A few hours, so few that she could number them on her fingers, and she would have looked her last for a long year on the loving faces and the dear home-things that had cradled her from infancy; on Richard, the white-whiskered tabby, that she had teased and fondled so often; on the stool on which she had sat and crooned her doll to sleep, and the cottage dresser beneath which she had kept shop and sold currant-water for wine; on a hundred things endeared to her by recollections of work and play, and above all on the worn face of the mother whose love had warmed her and sheltered her all the days of her life—the life that had seemed at times dull and eventless, but now held out clinging arms to her, dressed itself in the colours of home, offered its lap of peace and security.

Now she must leave all and enter a formal and unfriendly world, where she must stand alone, unfended and unwelcome, just a machine, priced and paid for—a young person, as Lady Elisabeth had styled her.

But though Rachel quailed on the threshold of the hard road that tens of thousands, young and timid as she, have travelled, the lonely road that leaves on one side love and maidens' dreams, she had a brave heart, and her spirit rose on the wings of youth. For after all this was adventure. For her no coming out, no first ball with its wakeful hours of anticipation and the delicious tremors that set the feet dancing; but instead this faring-forth with its charm of the untried and the unknown, its call on nerve and will, its vague promise. So she forced a smiling word, and chid Ruth for her extravagances, even while she noted with a pang her mother's toil-hardened hands, her greying hair, her careworn face.

Fortunately there were still things to do, even after the tea-cups were gone; and be sure that among the odds and ends to be packed Bath post was not forgotten, though, 'La, mother,' Ruth remonstrated, 'there'll be paper there—hot-pressed and I don't know what!'

'Yes, mother, there will be sure to be writing-paper.'

But Mrs. South was not to be moved. 'I don't know what there may be. But you'll take some, Rachel. I shall be miserable if I don't know that you have it and can write at any moment. There is no knowing in great houses what there is and what there is not. And don't you wait, child, for franks or anything of that kind. And now,' she added, with an anxious look at the clock, 'we must go to bed if you are to leave at six.'

Fine words! But what mother could bear to cut short the last evening? What mother's heart could rob itself of those last moments over the expiring fire when all had been done and the breakfast cups stood ready on the table? Was there not always some new caution to be given, some word of advice to be repeated? Or some mute caress, some loving glance? At length, however, the moment came. The lamp was extinguished, the wood embers were raked together, they passed, candle in hand, into the little passage where Rachel's cowhide trunk, lying small and lonely at the foot of the stairs, dealt their hearts a fresh blow.

But, at the head of the steep flight which Rachel's childish feet had trodden a thousand times, the mother's heart revolted. 'Do you go to Rachel's bed, my dear,' she said to Ruth. 'She may sleep with me to-night. I have something to say to her.' And when Ruth would have demurred, Mrs. South's face stayed the remonstrance.

Alone with her child and with the door closed on them the mother's composure gave way. 'Oh, my lamb, my lamb!' she cried, and folded the wanderer to her breast. 'God keep you! You don't know what is before you, and I don't. But I know that it is a hard world, and you'll need to be wise. You are going among strangers and you'll have cold words, and cold looks, and some, maybe, that may not be cold, but may be worse. Oh, my own, promise me that you will be careful. That you will think of me waiting and watching and hungering for a word. You'll think of me, Rachel, if trouble comes or—or temptation? For I have only you and Ruth, and Ruth I can fend for, but you, you must fend for yourself. You'll think, my darling, won't you?'

But what more she said and what Rachel promised her, as the two women clung together under the humble sloping roof—are there not things so sacred, so hallowed by love that even a bird of the air may not carry them abroad?

CHAPTER II.

FARING FORTH.

M. BOURLAY—some called him M. de Bourlay, but no one in Exeter knew whether he had a right to the particle, the status of the *émigrés* being a standing puzzle to John Bull—danced up and down and waved his little cocked hat after the coach. ‘*Bon voyage ! Au revoir et à bientôt !*’ he cried. And heedless of ridicule and of the grinning loafers before Foot’s hotel, he blew kisses after his pupil, until, to the lilting notes of ‘*Oh dear, what can the matter be ?*’ mounting from the guard’s key-bugle into the crisp early air, the coach swung out of sight round a corner.

It was not until this, the last strand that bound her to home, had parted, and she knew that for some hours she had only to sit with her feet in the straw and await her fate, that Rachel gave way and cried a little in her corner. She could do so unwatched, for she had but two companions, a stout tradesman and his stouter wife, and they were too busy blaming one another for the tardiness that had nearly cost them their seats, to pay heed to the little girl in the bonnet and tipped who sat so still in her corner. By the time the team had struggled up Straightway Hill, youth, the changing scene, and the sunshine of a fine morning had made their claim, and Rachel had dried her tears.

It was the first of September, and here and there she saw sportsmen with their dogs crossing the stubbles, or wading through turnips. At Honiton volunteers were drilling in the wide street, sharp orders rang out, men, their pouches flapping against their legs, ran to and fro, and there was a stir and a glitter ; a reflection of the war that in this last year of the century was beating against the South Coast, and rousing stout hearts to meet the threat of invasion. A brace of officers climbed to the box-seat but travelled only as far as Chard, where orderlies met them with led horses, and there was much parade and saluting. Rachel viewed all with young, curious eyes, and despite her sad thoughts was interested. She saw things that she had never seen before, and what with these stirring interludes and the common traffic of the highway with its unending stream of coaches and chaises, harvest wains and London wagons, and the hamlets that strung along the road like a chain of beads, came so often and passed so quickly, the time went by. Before she was aware of it they were over Windwhistle

Hill and descending with groaning brakes into Crewkerne. Here, before the Mermaid, they came to rest, the many-caped coachman flung down his whip, the travellers descended, the waiters cried, 'Dinner, gentlemen, dinner!'

Rachel, timid and strange, would fain have kept her seat. She had no appetite, and the value of money, that she was now to earn, pressed upon her. But she had to resist the clamour not only of the waiters but of her fellow-travellers. 'God bless thee, my dear!' the fat man adjured her, 'never miss a meal. There's no lining keeps up the heart like beef and pudding! And the celery at this house is a treat!' So she had to move, but instead of entering the house she walked a little way down the street and in a quiet corner ate the sandwiches, on which there fell a salt tear or two, as she thought of the loving hands that had packed them. But she reminded herself that she was now to play a stout part in the world, and when she returned to her seat and the coach filled up, she showed a composed face.

A young man in the farthest corner thought it a face worth staring at, and Rachel might have found his attention embarrassing if she had not had more solid ground for annoyance. The tradesman had taken his fill not only of the beef and pudding, but of the Mermaid's strong ale. He was drowsy, and every five minutes he fell over and crushed her out of sight in a manner as absurd as it was uncomfortable. Then the coach grew noisy as it grew crowded. Two of the new-comers fell to wrangling over this talk of invasion, the one maintaining that it was all a hum, a flam, a trick of they government chaps to clap on new taxes and take more lads from the plough-tail, while, 'Ay, I smoke your sort,' the other retorted with disdain. 'But I'm thinking you'll sing to another tune when you're burnt in your bed one of these dark nights.'

'If my stacks be fired,' the farmer replied with ponderous certainty, 'I'm bound 'twon't be Bony nor they Frenchies, mister! More like some o' your peacock-dressed, tearing, swearing yeomanry lads. Just kiss-the-maids they be! That's what they be, drat 'em!'

The other turned up his eyes. 'You're a Methodist, my man! That's what it is, I see!'

The farmer swelled till his face was purple. 'A Methodist!' he bawled. 'I'd have you know, young man, I'm a churchwarden! Churchwarden of Weston-under-Panwood these seven years.'

'Two pipes and a tabor !' his opponent muttered, shifting his ground unfairly.

'And sung "God save the King" every Sunday of my life since His Majesty's late illness—which the Lord knows what it was, but 'twas a mystery. And, damme, He will save him too, but 'twon't be by any o' your Joseph-coated, henroost-robbing lads—a plague to honest men they be ! But by Lord Nelson and Admiral Cornwallis as I pay my rent to ! I'll answer for it, as long as oak swims, they'll never let no Frenchman come within sight o' you, little man !'

A third brawler burst in on this, and the dispute roused Rachel's neighbour from his beery slumbers. He sat up, and, while the change freed the girl from bodily discomfort, it only left her mind at greater liberty to dwell on the trials before her. She had a nervous dread of the change which she must make at Salisbury. Suppose she could not get her trunk out in time ! Or suppose, unaccustomed to the flurry of the coach office, she entered the wrong coach and travelled Heaven knew whither ! Still, the change was a small matter after all, and doubtless she would compass it; but beyond it loomed, ever more near, things that filled her heart with dread. The arrival at the great house, her entrance—she saw herself so small and lonely a figure !—her reception by a crowd of servants. Then the first meal in strange surroundings, the introduction to her ladyship, to her pupil—she did not know at the prospect of which of these things her heart beat most painfully. And they were all coming nearer ; with every mile, with every hour, they rose more tremendous before her. When the coach changed horses at Shaftesbury she did not know whether she longed for the end, or felt suspense less intolerable. She only knew that she yearned with passion for the bedtime hour when these trials would be behind her and she might be alone with a little space in which to gather courage for the morrow. And still—for now they were away again—the coach swung inexorably onward, uphill and downhill, and the men swore and wrangled, and the tradesman's wife snored in the opposite corner.

A little waif going forth into a hard world ! Her feet were cold, her throat was dry, she swallowed continually. Her eyes now reviewed the small parcels that she had with her, now scanned the passing scene lest the first houses of Salisbury should surprise her. Long before they sighted the graceful, soaring spire she fancied the city at hand ; three times she collected her possessions and

sat on thorns, wondering how she should make her way to the distant door from which so many burly knees divided her.

But at last Salisbury came. They cantered along Fisherton Street and over the bridge, swept through the Market Place and, turning right-handed into Catherine Street, stopped, to the merry music of the bugle, before the White Hart. Rachel clutched her packets and got to her feet. But, alas, all were for alighting, and she was last. When she did emerge she found herself in a crowd, pushed this way and that and unregarded, and it was not until the coachman discovered her and flipped her half-crown into his pocket that she gained attention. With all his majesty, he was a good-natured man with an eye for females in distress, and he spoke to the guard, and presently her trunk was hunted out and handed down. A stable-helper in a moleskin cap shouldered it. 'Where away, miss?' he cried. He was in a hurry—everyone seemed to be in a hurry.

'The Ringwood coach,' she said. 'It starts from here?'

The man grinned. 'It do, miss—to-morrow morning!'

Panic seized her. 'Oh, but—I was told that it met this coach,' she stammered. She had foreseen nothing as bad as this.

'It did—yesterday. It don't to-day. Summer coach, d'you see, miss? 'Twere took off the road yesterday.'

She stood bewildered. People were pressing about her, cutlers' apprentices offering their wares, others entering and leaving the yard; she had much ado not to be pushed into the not over-clean water-channel flowing on the farther side of the way—she was such a light little thing anyone could thrust her aside. 'But what am I to do?' she pleaded. 'I must be at Ringwood this evening.'

'You can post, o' course.'

'Oh, dear, dear!' Posting was a terrible expense, she knew. 'How far is it, please?'

'I dunno, miss. You'd best ask in the yard.'

She was ready to cry. She had received her bare fare from Salisbury to Ringwood, and she knew that to post would cost infinitely more. Faintly she asked how much it would be.

But the man had another job in prospect. 'You'd best ask in the yard,' he said, and dumped her trunk down inside the archway. 'There! The master is there now. He'll tell you.' He hurried away.

Her heart in her mouth, Rachel walked into the yard. A burly man was giving orders to a knot of helpers, who were running out

the new team. The coachman, a tankard in his hand, stood at his elbow, a servant hung behind waiting for a word, in the passages on the left bells were ringing and chambermaids hurrying, from the red-curtained windows on the same side faces looked out. Rachel, in an agony between shyness and impatience, was pausing, uncertain what to do, when the burly man's eye fell on her. He broke off, and stepped towards her. 'What for you, miss?' he asked.

'I expected to meet the Ringwood coach here,' she explained. Now I am told that it does not go.'

'Quite right, miss.'

'Then what am I to do?'

'Well, you can either post or stay the night. There's a coach at eleven in the morning.'

'What will it cost to post?' she asked anxiously.

'To Ringwood, miss?'

'Yes, I am going to Queen's Folly. It's near Ringwood, I understand.'

'Queen's Folly!' The man's manner changed a shade. 'Well, it's seventeen miles to Ringwood—the Folly's seven miles farther. One-and-six out and ninepence in—call it two pounds, miss, to Ringwood.' Then, seeing her dismayed face, 'If expense is any matter, it will be cheaper to stay the night. The coach fare is a crown. But if you'll step into the coffee room I'll come to you by-and-by.' He pointed to the door on the left of the yard. 'You, Joe, shove the young lady's trunk in the passage.'

There seemed to be nothing else to do, and Rachel crept into the coffee room. Some travellers were swallowing a hasty meal at the table, but no one heeded her, and she slid into the darkest corner, and sat clutching her parcels and wondering what she ought to do. If she posted she would have to spend two pounds out of a purse slenderly filled, and would arrive almost penniless. On the other hand, she was to be met at Ringwood, and if she stayed the night here what would happen? The dull room with its smell of pickles, the heavy sideboard, the smouldering fire supplied no answer. The travellers rose and trooped noisily out, and she was alone, but no nearer a solution. Before the landlord came she must make up her mind.

It seemed that he was in no haste to come. She heard the coach start, and, fearing all things now, feared that she was forgotten. She moved to a window and looked into the yard to learn if he was still there. He was there, and so close to the window that

instinctively she retreated behind the red curtain. He was talking to a tall man in a cocked hat and a shabby cloak worn over some sort of uniform: a plain, blackish-looking man with a long, thin nose and very keen eyes. She had but one glance at him, then he and the landlord passed out of sight, but an instant later, the door of the room being ajar, she heard their voices in the passage.

'In half an hour,' the stranger said—and she thought his voice as harsh as his features. 'And, Turpin, tell that d—d rascal Sam that he shall have his skinful of ale at the house. But if he starts drunk again he'll wish himself triced up to the crosstrees in a gale of wind, for I'll break every bone in his body!'

'I'll see he starts sober, Captain,' the other replied respectfully. 'I suppose'—Turpin seemed to hesitate—'her ladyship's not at the house?'

'No, man. Why?'

'There's a young lady in the house that says she's going there. Meant to go by the coach that was taken off yesterday.'

'A young lady?'

'So she told me, Captain.'

'Then she lied,' the Captain replied bluntly, 'if she told you she was a young lady. One of the servants with a pretty face, that got on your blind side, man.'

'Well, I don't know.' The landlord seemed to doubt. 'She looked a bit better than that to me. And I see all sorts, sir.'

'Ay, but set a pretty face before you, and—' He broke off, and, in a different tone, and as if to himself, 'No, it can't be that!' he muttered. 'He's not there, and, damme, he's not come down to that yet. No!' Then, sharply to Turpin, 'What's she like, man? Gay?'

'No, sir, as quiet as a mouse. To tell the truth—'

'Well?'

'I made bold to think that, as you were going over, you might perhaps—'

'Take her with me?' The stranger laughed discordantly. 'You be hanged! I think I see myself! You take me for my lord, Turpin. No petticoats and no reefer's tricks for me! I'm too old by many years. But there, I've a letter to write, and must get to the pot-hooks.'

And, humming to himself in a tuneless voice:

'Oh, Hood and Howe and Jervis
Are masters of the main,

Cornwallis sweeps the narrow seas
And logs the weather-vane,'

he strode into the coffee room, crossed the floor and seized the bell-rope. He pulled it violently, and instead of standing to wait, as four men out of five would have done, fell at once to pacing between door and window.

' And Duncan in his seventy-four,
His Venerable seventy-four,
From freezing Texel to the Nore
Brings Mynheer to his knees.

Here, John,' as the waiter hastened in, ' you lazy devil, find me a quill and an inkhorn. And when you have done that, bring me a dish of catlap—and move all this clutter ! ' thrusting forcibly aside half a dozen clattering plates. ' Damme, man, the place is as dirty as a gunners' mess ! '

' Won't be a minute, sir ! ' John replied, and flew to obey at a pace very different from that at which he had attended on the chance travellers.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAPTAIN.

THE Captain resumed his pacing—six short steps and a turn, six short steps and a turn.

' But Hood and Howe and Jervis,
Cornwallis, Camperdown,
May step across to leeward
And haul their pennants down.
For Nelson's on the weather deck,
Lord Admiral Nelson walks the deck,
Turns his blind eye to squall and wreck,
Our Michael of the Seas.'

He hummed this doggerel to the end as freely as if he had been alone. But Rachel, cowering in her shadowy corner, knew the precise moment when his eyes alighted on her, although he only betrayed the discovery by a single searching glance. He continued to pace to and fro until John returned and cleared a corner of the table.

Rachel had heard all that he had said in the passage, and though she had not understood the whole, she had mettle enough to resent the tone in which he had spoken of her. She longed to escape before the horrid man addressed her, but he was between her and the door, and while she wavered he sat down to write. He seemed in his blackness—for he still wore his cloak—both ugly and formidable, and she was not sure that he did not from time to time glance up and inspect her in the mirror before him. Suddenly, ‘How do you spell “bergamot”?’ he shot out—‘one *t* or two?’

‘One.’

The word sprang from her lips before she was aware, drawn from her by the thrust of the question. The next moment her cheeks burned and she looked at the door; but the distance between her and it seemed to have grown, and to reach the door she must pass by him. Meantime he coolly finished his letter, folded and directed it. When John entered with the tea, he stepped to the door and went out.

But not beyond the passage. She heard him call: ‘Turpin!’

Apparently Turpin was at hand, for, ‘Who the deuce is she?’ the stranger asked, in a tone somewhat more subdued.

‘Well, I’m thinking, sir, she might be the young lady’s governess.’

‘I’m hanged if she is! Her ladyship was saying this morning that it was high time she got one. What are you doing about her?’

‘Well, sir, she must post or stay. She’ll do whichever’s cheaper, I’m thinking.’

‘Umph! Well, d—n the girl! I’ll speak to her.’

If there had been two doors Rachel would have run out by the other—the man was becoming a terror to her. But before she could move a yard he was back again, and this time he turned to her and looked her over as coolly as if she had been a limpet. A tremulous mouth, good eyes, a turned-up nose, he told himself; fair curls, a bonnet and tippet—she might be a governess after all—looked like it, but devilish young!

‘You’re going to Queen’s Folly?’ he said.

Rachel resented his interference, but after a moment’s hesitation she answered the question. ‘Yes,’ she said.

‘Her ladyship is not there. You know that, I suppose, ma’am?’

‘No, sir.’

‘You did not know it?’

‘No.’

' Well, you know it now. Do you still wish to go, young lady ? '

' Yes.' She shot out the word. She was growing angry. What business had he to question her ?

But he had not done. ' Why, if you please ? ' he asked. ' What is your business there ? '

Rachel went rather white, but her eyes gleamed resentfully. ' That is my business, sir,' she said. ' I do not know what right you have to question me.'

' Ho ! ho ! An angry robin, eh ? ' For a second a glint of something—sarcasm, humour, amusement—shone in his sharp eyes. ' Well, it's a little of my business too, ma'am. I am Lord Ellingham's brother, and now you know that perhaps you won't refuse to answer my question.'

Poor Rachel's plumes drooped. ' I am the new governess,' she said meekly.

' The devil you are ! Governess to whom, may I ask ? '

' To Lady Ann Dunstan.' There were tears in her eyes. The man was rude and stared at her so incredulously.

Now, however, he seemed to be surprised on his side. ' To Ann ? ' he exclaimed. ' And who signed you on, young woman ? '

' Who—I don't understand.'

' Who engaged you ? ' impatiently. ' Signed articles with you ? That's English, I suppose.'

' Lady Elisabeth—at Exeter,' Rachel said with dignity, and did not guess how violent was the retort that her frightened face and quivering little mouth curbed on his lips.

Even as it was, ' D—d old vixen ! ' he muttered. ' Must she make mischief too ! '

For a moment he stood, pondering darkly. Then, ' You're but a little thing,' he said, measuring her with a disparaging eye. ' Have you seen your pupil ? '

' No, sir.'

' Well, she's pretty near as tall as you, and a sight broader in the beam ! And a rare handful, I can tell you, with as many tricks and turns as a sea-lawyer. You don't look to me one to bring her up with a short turn ! Do you know what you'll do if you take my advice, young woman ? '

' No ! ' Rachel spoke sharply. She was growing restive again. She was beginning to ask herself with spirit what this man who stood over her, frowning her down, had to do with it. He might be the uncle of her pupil, but—— ' No ! ' she repeated.

'Well, you'd heave to and put about. That's what you'd do. And look for another berth.'

'I don't see, sir, what you——'

'You'd take the next coach back,' he continued. 'That's my advice. Do you take it, young lady. Or, believe me, you'll find yourself in irons off a lee shore.'

But Rachel was one of those who, left to themselves, are meek and yielding, but pushed to the wall, react against force. For a space the man's presence, his masterful tone and black looks had imposed on her; but now she asked herself what right he had to dictate to her, to bid her change her plans and abandon her prospects. And stiffly, with a little air of dignity, not ill assumed, 'I shall do nothing of the kind,' she said. 'I have been properly engaged, sir, and until my employer dis—discharges me'—her voice trembled, for, alas! her dignity was but skin-deep after all—'I shall carry out my plans and—and be guided only by those who have authority over me.'

She expected an angry outburst, and hardened herself to meet it. Instead a whimsical smile for a moment transformed the man's harsh features. 'Lord!' he said, 'what a cock-sparrow it is! I am to keep my own side of the deck, am I? Hands off, eh? But no! No, young lady,' calmly interposing himself as Rachel rose and made a move towards the door, 'one moment. If you mean to go on, there's more to be said.'

Her little head was in the air. 'I do not wish to hear it, sir,' she said.

'But,' he rejoined, 'you've got to hear it, damme if you haven't! Lord, to listen to you, you might be Kitty herself. You've got to hear it. If this is not my business it's chock-a-block to it. If you're going on I must take you, I suppose.'

'Oh no!' she cried, all her dignity dropping from her. 'If you please, I would rather, far rather——'

'Rather what? Shape your own course, eh? Go your own way? No, no, young woman, if you go on, you belong to my convoy, and you'll obey orders and keep the line, or you'll be whipped into it with a shot across your bows. Have you had any tea?'

'No,' Rachel faltered. 'I don't—want any.'

'Fiddlesticks!' He pointed to the tray. 'There, it's your job to pour out.' He stepped to the bell and pulled it with the violence with which he seemed to do everything. 'Another cup!' he commanded. 'And tell your master the young lady will go with

me. Horses at the door in'—he consulted his watch—'in ten minutes ! No !' addressing the girl in the same sharp tone, ' fill for yourself ! Petticoats first. No sugar for me.'

She had to obey, and until John returned he walked up and down, to all appearance as regardless of her as if she had not been present. He drank his tea, standing at the table, while she hid her hot face in her cup or gazed with fearful interest at the cocked hat that he had cast upon the table. With what strange things, what strange situations, was her start in life bringing her into contact ! With what unpleasant, impossible personages ! If she must judge of the family by him, for what a lot was she cast, what a reception she must expect ! And if her pupil was as turbulent and rude as he painted her, what difficulties lay before her ! If he described Lady Ann as turbulent, what must she be ! Rachel's heart sank into her boots, and clearly she foresaw that her stay in her first situation would not be lengthy.

Still from these horrors some short space still separated her. More dreadful loomed the two hours that she must spend in the man's company, and not only in his company but shut in with him in the narrow space of a post-chaise, and conscious, every minute of the time, of his disapproval. She dreamt for a moment of surrender, dwelt on the possibility of yielding. She tasted the joy of release alike from present misery and from future trials. She saw herself in the night coach, returning to the dear home, the very prospect of which brought tears to her eyes.

'But Rachel had a clear head as well as a sturdy will, and it needed but the briefest reflection to assure her that the return journey would not be the care-free jaunt that fancy had for a few seconds painted, but a weary nightmare of repentance and self-reproach. The return of the vanquished !

So, when the chaise came jingling down the yard—they saw it pass—and he said curtly, 'Signal's up, young woman ! But it is not too late to change your mind. Still for going on, eh ?'—which seemed to prove that he had observed her more closely than she supposed—she rose with a composed air.

'Certainly, sir, if you please.'

'Well,' gruffly, 'I don't please. But you've had your warning. Line ahead.'

She went out before him. The landlord and a knot of servants were gathered to see them start, and she had to run the gauntlet of all. The Captain said a word to Turpin that drew a smile, he

stepped in, and the door was closed. The chaise rumbled under the archway, turned before the dead wall of the Close with its bordering water-channel, and swung away down Exeter Street.

Rachel had had little to do with men, and had never been in such close contact with a man before, and she gazed out of the window in an agony of shyness. She watched the houses go by, and apparently her companion did the same, for they were clear of the city and were passing Longford Park wall before he gave a sign of life. Then he began again—but absently—to hum his old ditty :

‘ Oh, Hood and Howe and Jervis
Are masters of the main,
Cornwallis sweeps the narrow seas
And logs the weather-vane.’

He hummed it to the close. Then, if she might judge from the sound, for she did not dare to turn her head, he took out some papers, and for a while he busied himself with them. In the end he put them up again, and with his wonted abruptness, ‘ This your first cruise ? ’

‘ Yes.’

‘ Umph ! What’s your age, young lady ? ’

She longed to snub him for his impertinence—he really was intolerable ! But she had not the courage, and ‘ Nineteen,’ she said meekly.

‘ By gad, then, you’ve a nerve, ma’am, and just off the stocks. But look out for squalls, and north-easters too, by Jove ! And don’t say you haven’t been warned ! ’

She made no reply to this. She decided that he was bent on frightening her and she was stubbornly determined not to be frightened, or at any rate not to betray her fears. He began to troll his eternal chanty again, and presently out of sheer impatience she did a thing that she would have thought impossible, but the words were out before she was aware. ‘ Why Michael ? ’ she asked.

She coloured with vexation the moment she had spoken, but it was too late. ‘ Why Michael ? ’ he repeated flatly. ‘ Well, why not ? ’

‘ Why not ? —she was in for it now and must go on—‘ why not St. George, or—or St. Patrick ? ’ she stammered.

‘ St. George for Merry England, eh ? Come, you’ve heard of Nelson before, I suppose, young lady ? ’

'Of course !' she replied resentfully.

'Ever heard where he was born ?'

'At—in Norfolk, at Burnham Thorpe !' She was indignant that he should suppose her so ignorant as not to know that.

'When ?'

She had to acknowledge reluctantly that she did not know.

'And you call yourself a governess !' heretorted. 'Why, there's many a topman, that can't tell big A from little B, that could teach you that. He was born on Michaelmas Day, Miss Wisdom. And so was another, of whom you may have heard by chance. Ever heard of Lord Clive ?'

'Of course.'

'Well, he was born on Michaelmas Day too ! Michael's sons both of 'em, and born with a sword in their fists instead of a silver spoon in their mouths ! Lord, ma'am, and you didn't know that ! And I'll wager you don't know on what day St. Vincent was fought ?'

He was really a horrid man ! But this time she did know the answer—by chance. 'St. Valentine's Day,' she shot out.

He chuckled openly. 'Ay, that's more to do with you. The women all remember that. The V. battle. Fought off St. Vincent's on Valentine's Day, flagship the *Victory*, Commander-in-Chief, Earl St. Vincent, as he now is ! And d—d well fought too, Tartar as he is, saving your presence. But I can tell you, ma'am, you'll have to be smarter than you are ! If you don't keep a good look-out, it will be Ann will be teaching you !'

Rachel could have cried with mortification, but she was too nervous to retort, and, satisfied with his triumph—which she felt to be as unfair as it was crotchety and absurd—the wretch fell to whistling to himself. The carriage rolled on along the flat road near the clear-flowing Avon with its border of water-meadows, fringed on either hand, but at a distance, by low wooded heights. Soon they crossed the river at what she took to be Fordingbridge. The woods on the left began to rise more steeply against a greenish evening sky, and by the time they had swung round the church at Ringwood and traversed the village, leaving its long causeway and rustic wharves with their piles of timber away to the right, the day was closing in, twilight was upon them. They turned their backs on the meadows over which the river-mist was fast drawing a veil, and began to climb a winding sandy road that mounted in a mile or two to stretches of melancholy moorland, vast and bleak, dipping here

and there, but not where their way traversed it, into narrow gorges, outlined for them by dark lines of tree-tops. The evening wind blew cold across the waste, peewits wailed shrilly in the twilight. Rachel shivered. Her mind sank under the weight of loneliness and depression that the scene suggested and that the strangeness of all that she saw redoubled. With the welcome and happy lights of home before her she must still have owned the influence of place and hour, of the barren treeless upland, the wailing birds, the growing dusk. But as it was, with all that she loved left behind her in another world—for indeed it seemed so to her—with no prospect before her more cheerful than that on which she gazed, no welcome to anticipate save one that filled her with nervous dread, it was as much as, it was almost more than she could do, gripping one hand in the other, to keep back the sobs that in the presence of this man would be the last humiliation.

That she did keep them back, lonely little soul, was to her credit—men have gone on forlorn hopes and have won medals and crosses at less cost !

Suddenly they swerved off the road that ran like a pale ribbon across the moorland. They began to descend, and about them solitary thorn-trees, gnarled and ghostly, started up, breaking the waste. Presently they were driving through dark woods, they passed between two stone pillars—gateless—they rolled smoothly along a grand avenue flanked by a black wall of trees set far back on either side. At length—for to her trembling in her corner the avenue seemed to be endless—the postboys cracked their whips, the jaded horses mustered a canter, she saw before her a long pile of building, in which a meagre light or two showed at one end.

'Thank God, that's over !' her companion muttered. 'We are there !' He yawned as he stretched his long legs and prepared to alight.

(To be continued.)

THE SAINT FROM THE HILL-TOP.

A TRUE STORY.

It was in Afghanistan in the year 1896. I was nearly at the end of my tether, for I had been acting as physician to the Ameer for three years, and I had begun to long for home. The beauty of the East is like that of a panther, full of charm and cruelty and treachery, and, as the only European, I often felt myself a stranger in a strange land. There was no one in whom I could confide or to whom I could turn for advice, and, at the time of which I write, the whole land seemed to lie under a curse. Abdur-Rahman was in one of his slaughtering moods, intent on extirpating all evildoers in his realm. There were spies everywhere, whisperings, mysterious disappearances, a sound of hurrying feet and of muffled cries. Familiar faces vanished; whither none dared ask. A servant, here to-day, was gone to-morrow, and dismay and horror clouded every face.

Once, when the Ameer was especially pleased with me and furious with his officers, I did venture to say that, though he should destroy all murderers, one would yet remain—and I know he understood me, for I saw him smile to himself. There was a strange bond of sympathy between us. He respected my education, and knew that I appreciated the difficulties of ruling such a country as his, and that knowledge soothed him at times.

But now violence and torture were the order of the day, and I was powerless to mitigate it. An alien woman, what could I do? For my own soul's sake, I longed to turn my back on the country for ever, and return to civilisation and peace and humanity; but how was it to be done? I knew the Ameer would never give his consent, for he valued my medical services, and was anxious to keep me at his court. I consulted his chief secretary of state, but he could give me no counsel; the dark terror weighed upon his spirit, as on mine.

In this perplexity, I suddenly thought of a 'Holy Man,' a Mohammedan 'Ustad' or Teacher, who had once consented to meet me in Cabul. It was long before he would agree to converse with one not of the true faith, but I had heard of his fame, and left no stone unturned to bring about an interview. At last, when he

was told that the Ameer had said I really was a good Mohammedan although I did not know it, he had condescended to receive me. I had been much struck by his remarkable personality, his insight, his intuition, his reading of character and grasp of events.

He was said to have knowledge of all mysteries ; the past lay open to his eyes, and the future could not hide its secrets. He communed with the saintly dead as with the living, and though in the world, was scarcely of it.

Certainly he made a great impression on me at our meeting, for he was a man of unusual gifts, and I wondered now whether he could not give me some help or advice that would be of use to the distracted country, or a guide to my own footsteps. Yes, I would see him if I could.

One of the Ameer's officials, who still lives, and whose name I therefore withhold, undertook to send for him, and we anxiously awaited the return of the messenger. Alas ! the Holy Man was starting on a far mission—he could not come, but instead he would send his brother-in-law, who might be of some use to us.

We were greatly disappointed, but even more so when the brother-in-law arrived. Though an assistant of the great Ustad, he was just a plain, ordinary, commonplace man, no dreamer of dreams, no seer of visions. What could he do for us ?

Patience, I fear, has never been my strong point, and when, in answer to my question as to whether he could lay claim to any of the gifts of his great relative, he mildly said ' Oh, no. He is a very holy man, and sees the invisible. How can I be like him ? ' I broke out with ' Then of what use are you here ? This is a mere mockery, stones for bread. Why have you come ? Tell me, how did your brother-in-law become so holy—how did he reach such heights ? '

' The Doctor Sahib must not be angry with me,' was his humble answer. ' He became spiritual through much prayer and constant fasting. He went away into the wilderness and he communed with Allah, and now, because of that, his counsel is sought far and wide. God has given him great gifts, but I am but a simple man.'

' Then,' I interrupted warmly, ' why did you come here at all ? Go yourself into the desert and pray and fast and see if you cannot get some discernment of things spiritual. When God has given you a message, then come back to me, not before. I am sorry, but you yourself must see that you can in no way help us. Tell the Ustad that it was useless to send such a substitute.'

We parted, and I settled down again to the daily nightmare of blood and terror. I had my work, for the poor flocked to me for medical aid, and the days were full.

One day, the man we called the 'brother-in-law' (for I never knew his name) returned, a little dejected we thought. He had seen nothing, heard nothing. 'How could I expect it?' he asked; 'I am no saint. You think lightly of my teacher's powers if two or three months seem to you sufficient to acquire the gifts that Allah alone can give, and which need half a lifetime of self-abnegation.'

'I do not think lightly of your teacher's gifts, and I know something of how they are acquired. I will learn patience and ask you to go again and commune with the great Spirit Who can give His spiritual gifts to men.'

He went. Weeks passed, and autumn was almost on us, when one day Mohammed Din, one of the servants, came running to me and announced: 'The brother-in-law is returning! I see him coming down from the hill-top with a friend. What do you wish me to prepare for their reception?'

'Prepare such refreshment as they may require, and see that a tent and charpois (beds) are got ready, for they may be weary. But bring them at once to my tent on their arrival, that I may receive them with all courtesy. Perhaps the Ustad is with him this time!'

I waited hopefully, but presently the brother-in-law entered alone. 'I have come back,' he said, 'and I have brought a message for you.'

'But where is your friend?' I asked eagerly.

'My friend? I am alone,' he said. 'No one is with me.'

'Your friend,' I repeated, 'with whom you came down the hill. Mohammed Din saw you both together.'

He looked startled. 'I did not think anyone else would see him,' he murmured. 'It was the dead Saint who lies buried on the hill-top. I have been in the desert, as you told me. I have fasted and prayed, and at last even to me some hidden things have been revealed. I have talked with the Saint, and he has sent this message to you by me: You are not to vex yourself overmuch. Everything is in God's hands, and nothing can happen without His will. You are safe, and you are free to go away if you wish. You have no duty to the Ameer but what he pays you for; you are not his subject. You are not even a professed follower of the true faith.'

'But that is not nearly all I want to know,' I said eagerly. 'I could bear a great deal myself, but what I suffer from so acutely is the total ignorance as to what becomes of my Afghan friends, my servants and theirs. Even Indians have disappeared, and Allah alone knows where they are. They may be starving in prison, they may be tortured, they may be dead. These Indians at least are my fellow-subjects.'

'But, Doctor, like you, they came here of their own free will, without any permission from the Government of India. For aught I know, they may have signed a paper, as you had to do, absolving your Government and theirs from all responsibility regarding their fate in this country.'

'Oh,' I said, 'can't you see it is just that that is killing me? I am no saint, far, far from it, but I come from a distant mountainous country where gifts such as your teacher has are believed in by some of my people. I want something that I fear I shall never get; you may smile at me, but I want to see this Saint of yours for myself. I believe what you tell me, but I want to know, to ask much more. Did you ask nothing about these Indian and Afghan officials for whom I am so much concerned?'

'I did,' he replied; 'and my answer was that those who belong to the only true religion, whether Indians or Afghans, are in the hands of Allah, and not a hair of their heads can be hurt, as says the Holy Book, without His permission. But they are under the God-granted government of Afghanistan, and it is their duty to remain where Allah has led them. If they leave, they leave their duty.'

'Thank you,' I said. 'Remain with me and teach me how I may do the duties for which the Ameer pays me, and yet gain that which I long for—such communing with the unseen that it may be given to me also to see.'

'I fear you will not see,' he answered. 'And why should you wish to see and commune with a Mohammedan Saint? I will gladly stay with you and fulfil all you require of me, as my Ustad directed. And for you, Doctor Sahib, work for Allah among His poor and suffering by day, and pray. When dusk comes on and your work is done, walk alone among the apple-trees far away from the tents, and concentrate your mind on God. Forget yourself and your perplexities, commune with the Unseen, with the Great Spirit, and above all cleanse your heart from all that is personal.'

I pondered much on what he had said, and I did try to carry out his directions. I tried to forget myself, and I wandered night after night among the old gnarled apple-trees. But no visions came to me! I watched the rats run along the long branches and make their way from one tree to another; I heard the incessant quarrelling of the doves, surely the most fractious and disagreeable of all birds. Sometimes one would be thrown upon the ground and wait long before it dared to return to its lawful nesting place, and I wondered at the ignorance of those who could write 'Birds in their little nests agree' and recommend us to 'dove-like be.'

And then I would pray rather that strength should be given me to bear the burden of my daily duties, than for the power to see visions, and I grew quieter in my mind and was soothed and comforted. But even then I found myself listening for the sound of passers-by along the road, wondering whether the Ameer had sent the secret police to call out some new victim, whether I should not hear stumbling footsteps and cries. One is always listening in Kabul, and yet, when one has listened, what does one know? Nothing, or after many months, perhaps years, a very little.

By day I often found my eyes wandering to the hill-top where the Saint lay buried. The grave was marked by the usual votive offerings, flags, a tin hand and rags of clothing to register some vow. The bodies of saints are greatly treasured in Afghanistan, and though doubly valued if they have made the pilgrimage to Mecca, yet the risk of losing the precious remains altogether has often led, I fear, to hurrying not a few of these devout men into Paradise before their time!

The year was passing; soon I must return to my winter quarters, and how far had I advanced? Perhaps I was doing my work better, but there was no solution to my problem. Could I leave the country, as the message had said? It seemed as impossible as ever.

And now comes the most extraordinary part of my story. I ask no one to believe it, and, but for outside confirmation, I should hardly have believed it myself. As I look back upon the experience, I can only say in the words of the Apostle, 'Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell.'

I had gone late to bed, as was my wont. I had placed my clock and my soap (for the rats or someone with two legs were constantly removing it) on the little table by my side, and I fell asleep. Suddenly I was aroused by a 'great wakening light,'

and I sat up to see an unknown man seated at the foot of my bed. One leg was crossed under him, and he was in white, the fold of his turban hanging down behind his head. His moustache was cut very short above his upper lip, and he was gazing at me intently. I was not consciously afraid, but I had lost all power of speech, and could only return his earnest gaze. At last I heard him say in quiet tones: 'I am here in answer to prayer, and because you have been kind to the poor of my country. They have called you the "Beggars' Doctor" in scorn, but this has gone up as a remembrance before Allah. He bids me say that you must not trouble yourself overmuch about this land and these people. They are not yours, you are in no way responsible. God holds all things in the hollow of His hand, the fate of the humblest is with Him. Nothing can happen without His will. These people who vanish, what of them? The good go to a better life, the evil reap the reward of their evil deeds. Can you not leave them with Allah?

'As for you, you have done what you could for the poor and afflicted, and you are free to go. You think you are not, but no man will hinder you. Go when you will.'

And then, forestalling a question I longed but had not the power to ask: 'You want to know what your friend who holds high office at the Court should do? He, too, is free to go whether he will, but though this is not his country, his duty lies here, among his co-religionists. If he goes, it is no sin, and he can ride out of the country alone, in safety, without any pass, in his Court uniform if he likes, for no obstacle will be put in his way. But if he stays among these people and helps them without thought of self, it shall be counted to him for righteousness.'

'Now Béman e Khuda' (remain with God), he said, and, rising slowly, he passed to the entrance of the tent and pushed back the heavy drapery that hung in front of it, and the bright light went with him. Beyond I could see the first faint streak of dawn, and I heard the Muezzin calling to early prayer, and the clatter of pots as the men fetched water for their 'Voozoo' (religious ablutions).

Quick as thought I seized and shook my clock to make sure I was awake, and rushed to my tent entrance. Should I see that figure passing among the men preparing for prayer? I looked out into the faintly illuminated deep blue Eastern night. No one was visible but the few dusky forms of the men about to pray.

I went back into my tent; my clock told me it was 3 A.M. I pondered over what had happened. Was it the vision of a weary

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and disordered brain ? Had my anxious cogitations taken this objective form ? Or was it a message from the unseen world ? I could find no answer. Probably the whole experience was unreal, but I felt happy and fell asleep.

Next morning, the official I mentioned before came early to my tent, a curious awed look upon his face. 'What is it ?' I said.

'It is for me to ask that,' he replied. 'Have you nothing to tell me ? But,' his face falling a little, 'what should you have ? You are an unbeliever, and how should you see the spirits of the faithful ? What are they to you ? Last night the Saint from the hill-top visited you, but your eyes were holden, you could not see. Others saw him—the brother-in-law and Mohammed Din. They saw him come out of your tent at dawn, just as the Muezzin was calling to early prayer, and round him was a great light that gradually faded as he disappeared into the shadows. No one, not even the brother-in-law, had speech with him, for his coming was for you and you only, and you never saw him ! They felt tongue-tied and could ask him nothing. Oh, the pity of it ! If you had only been of the true faith !'

'My friend,' I said, 'I did see him and the great light that was round him. He talked with me and he told me that I am free to go when I will. No one shall stay me. You, too, are free, but your higher duty lies here among the poor and suffering. You have to choose between a happier life in this world and a higher life in the world to come.'

He looked gravely at me. 'Doctor,' he said, 'surely if you had seen the Saint, you would have told me at once. You would not have waited for me to ask you if you had seen anything or if you had any message for me ; you would have known what relief and hope both for this life and the world to come I should have experienced. No, Doctor, I cannot believe that you have really seen him. You are trying to comfort me, that is all.'

A momentary anger filled me. 'Do you suppose that I would lie to give you hope or comfort ?' I exclaimed. 'Believe me or not, as you like, but if you had not been otherwise engaged you might have seen me at the entrance of my tent, looking out to see if the light that surrounded the Saint still lingered somewhere outside. There was only the gleam of dawn on the horizon, but it was not light enough for me to distinguish you or anyone. The early prayers had not started and there was still the clattering of

pots. Moreover, I was still stupefied with amazement when you came in, uncertain whether I had seen a vision or dreamed a dream, the result of my continual watching and my nightly wanderings among the old apple-trees. I should wonder still, had you not told me that the brother-in-law and Mohammed Din had both seen the Saint leave my tent as the Muezzin was calling.'

The official still shook his head. He could not believe that the vision had been vouchsafed to me, an unbeliever, nor that, having seen it, I could afterwards be uncertain and dazed.

I did not strive to convince him. It mattered little to me what others might think, for the experience, however it might be explained away, had brought me peace and courage to go on my way until my time in Afghanistan came to an end.

We both had cause afterwards to remember the Saint's words, for we both fled the country. He in an access of terror following on a terrible scene in Court, without a pass, still in his official clothes, rode across to safety, meeting no obstacle in his way. I left under strange circumstances and was received as I went through villages and towns with honour, almost with worship. For was I not the Ameer's Doctor, and were not my patients scattered in every direction ?

But all that is 'another story.'

LILLIAS HAMILTON.

(*For three years physician and surgeon at the Court of Afghanistan.*)

CHARLES LAMB AND 'THE LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER.'

BY WALTER JERROLD.

It is a rare pleasure to happen upon Elia, the whimsical, the friendly, the entertaining, within the covers of a volume that has for a century escaped alike the loving friends and the diligent biblical archaeologists who have sought to trace the appearance of his writings during those years of his pen-activity which were closed by death in 1834. It is, indeed, a pleasure now so rare that it can only come with the surprise of the wholly unexpected. Thus it came to me on finding some of the familiar essays of Charles Lamb embedded in a dumpy square volume acquired as addition to a heterogeneous collection vaguely grouped as 'jest books.' That pleasure came to be heightened to joy when I lighted on an essay which, while not known to be the work of Lamb, yet bears the impress of his style so markedly as, in all the circumstances, to make it difficult to dismiss it as the work of any mere 'seditious ape' of an imitator.

Before discussing the volume in which it occurs let me display something of the arriding essay itself. It is entitled 'The Humorous Man,' and much of it might well represent Charles Lamb himself as seen through his own eye of humour. There is not space to give the whole, but some passages may be cited to indicate the strength of the claim to Elian paternity. Lamb has somewhere said that 'a laugh is worth a hundred groans in any state of the market,' and of the humorous man we read :

'He would not barter with you one wakeful jest for a hundred sleepy sermons ; or one laugh for a thousand sighs. If he could allow himself to sigh about any thing, it would be that he had been serious when he might have laughed ; if he could weep for any thing, it would be for mankind, because they will not laugh more and mourn less. Yet he hath tears for the pitiable, the afflicted, the orphan, and the unhappy ; but his tears die where they are born,—in his heart ; he makes no show of them ; like April showers, they refresh where they fall, and turn to smiles, as all tears will, that are not selfish. His grief has a humanity in it, which is not satisfied with tears only ; it teaches him

'the disparity

'Tween poor and rich, weal and want, and moves
His heart to truth, his hands to charity.'

And again :

‘ He is a polite man, though a wit ; which is not what wits usually are ; they would rather lose a life than a joke. I have heard him express his detestation of those wits who sport with venomous weapons, and wish them the fate of Laertes, who, in his encounter with Hamlet, got his weapon changed, and was himself wounded with the poisoned foil he had designed for his antagonist. I mean by saying he is a polite man, that he is naturally, not artificially, polite ; for the one is but a handsome, frank-looking mask, under which you conceal the contempt you feel for the person you seem most diligent to please ; it is a gilt-edged envelope to a blank valentine ; a shell without a nut ; a courtesan in a fair Quaker’s chaste *satinity* and smooth sleekness ; the arch devil in a domino ;—the other is, as he describes it, taking the hat and cloak of your heart off, and standing uncovered and un-concealed in the presence of worth, beauty, or any one amiable quality.

‘ In short, he is a humane man ; and humanity is your only true politeness. I have seen him ridicule that politeness which contents itself with bowing and back-bending, very humorously. In walking through his garden, a tree or tall flower, touched by the passing wind, bowed its head towards him ; his hat was off, and the bow was returned with an old-school ceremoniousness and etiquette that would, perhaps, have cured Lord Chesterfield, that fine polisher of exteriors, of some of his hollow-nutted notions of manners. In this spirit, I saw him bow very profoundly to the giants, as he passed by St. Dunstan’s church.—He had asked his friend Hobbes or Dobbs (I know not which) what was the hour ? Before Hobbes could reply, the giants had informed him. “ Thank you, gentlemen,” said he, bowing to them with a graceful humour.

‘ I have said he is a humane man. He once detected an intimate cat picking his cold mutton, “ on a day, alack the day ! ” for he was then too poor to spare it well. Some men would have thrown a poker at her ; others would have squandered away a gentlemanly income of oaths, and then have sworn by private subscription ; an absent man, had he been present, would perhaps have thrown his young son and heir, or his gold watch and seals, at her ; another, perhaps, his wig ;—he contented himself with saying, “ I have two or three doubts, (which I shall put forth as much in the shape of a half-crown pamphlet as possible,) as to the propriety of your conduct in eating my mutton ” ; and then he brushed her off with his handkerchief, supped on half a French roll and a gooseberry, and went happy to bed.’

Incidental sentences may be referred to: 'His opinions of men and things have some spice of singularity in them. He conceives it to be a kind of *puppyism* in pigs that they wear *tails*. He defines a great coat to be "a *Spencer*, folio edition, with tail-pieces." ' And again: 'If he lends you a book, for the humour of the thing, he will request you, as you love clean shoes on a lord-mayor's day, to make no *thumb-and-butter references* in the margin; and will, moreover, ask you whether you have studied that modern "*art of book-keeping*," which has superseded the "*Italian method*," viz. of never returning the books you borrow? '

Then, too, we have the closing paragraph:

' For his puns, they fall as thick from him as leaves from autumn-bowers. Sometime since, he talked of petitioning for the office of *pun-purveyor* to his majesty; but ere he had written "and your petitioner shall ever" *pun*, it was bestowed on the yeoman of the guard. He still, however, talks of opening business as "*pun-wright* in general to his Majesty's subjects," for the diffusion of that pleasant smallware of wit; and intends to advertise "*puns* wholesale, retail, and for exportation. N.B. 1.—A liberal allowance made to captains and gentlemen going to the East or West Indies. Hooks, Peakes and Pococks, supplied on moderate terms. Worn-out sentiments and clap-traps taken in exchange. N.B. 2.—May be had in a *large* quantity in a *great deal* box, price five acts of sterling comedy, per packet; or in small quantities in court-plaster-sized boxes, price one melodrama and an interlude, per box. N.B. 3.—The genuine are sealed with a *Munden grin*; all others are counterfeits. *Long live Apollo!* ' etc., etc.'

All italicising in the above extracts is in the original. 'Satinity,' which is surely coinage of the mint peculiar to Lamb, was actually used by him in a letter to Gillman of March 1830. The incident of the giants of St. Dunstan's, and that concerning the 'unintimate cat,' are notably suggestive of Lamb; while the closing conceit concerning advertising was employed by Lamb with reference to acrostics and other 'smallware of wit' in a letter of April 1830. If not written by Lamb, this essay must have been by an imitator seeking to portray Lamb in his own manner.

Identification of literary work by internal evidence alone, while alluring, is apt to be misleading, and little more than mention must be made of two further essays included in my happy 'find.' One of these, 'The Other Fig,' is curiously similar to 'The Last Peach,' by which Elia was represented in *The London Magazine*

of April 1825, and is, indeed, quite Lamb-like in style as to the first part, though the moralising at the close is laboured in a fashion not usual with him. The other essay, 'The Suicide' (curiously indexed as 'Suicide, delights of'), opens thus: 'Basta.—I'll think no more about it. I have closed the accounts, and bring myself in debtor to death. All that remains to be considered is, how I am to do the business.' The writer then proceeds to toy with the various methods of suicide in turn; when he comes to hanging he recalls at once the authentic Lamb of the 'Inconveniences' of being hanged. A brief passage must be taken as representative of the whole:

'Who could feel pleasure in a posture of this kind? Your neck-attitude, too, is mighty unseemly. Look at the picture of Lord Coleraine—heretofore George Hanger—in the second page of his memoirs, or of old Izaak Walton, in the present exhibition at Somerset-House, and you will see how awkward a crick-in-the-neck-like position it is. Why Wainwright (*sic*) thought proper to exhibit old Izaak as just after being hanged, I do not know, and firmly believe that he has no warrant for it in any biography of the old piscator; but look at No. 268 in the above exhibition, and you will see him there evidently with the wry-neck twist of the gallows about him. In a word, I do not choose to be strung up.'

A reference to the hanged as 'pensile people,' and the sly allusion to Lord Coleraine's former name, are quite in the manner of Lamb; so, also, is the very introduction to consideration of this method of meeting death: 'It does not accord with a gentleman's ideas. I have always lived independent, and have no fancy for dying dependent on anything. A man is a long time in suspense. I hate your *pas seul* upon nothing.' I have, so far, failed to trace the first appearance of this essay, but it must have been in some periodical or miscellany of the summer of 1824, when Thomas Griffiths Wainewright's 'Milkmaid's Song' was exhibited at the Royal Academy, for that, it may safely be assumed, is the picture that must have included the great piscator in the scene.

Apart from the strong family likeness varyingly borne by the three essays mentioned to the acknowledged literary progeny of Charles Lamb, we have the further fact that the volume in which they are found includes several that are of his unquestioned paternity. Our 'Laughing Philosopher' presents indeed five or six of Lamb's acknowledged essays, though without any mention of his name or his not less famous pen-name. I say five or six, because one

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that is bipartite is here given as two, and it may be noted that certain other changes are made beyond the limits customarily permitted to borrowing editors. The half-dozen essays may be recorded catalogue-wise :

'The Melancholy of Tailors' (p. 186). The prefatory 'On' of the title is omitted, and only the latter part, about one-third of the essay as it appeared in *The Champion* of 1814 and the 'Works' of 1818, is given, while the opening lines have been altered from the first person.

'The Gentle Giantess' (p. 197), which had first appeared in *The London Magazine* for December 1822, and was there signed Elia; this is doubtless the earliest reprinting of the droll piece of character description.

'Confessions of the Inconveniences of Being Hanged' (p. 583) is the modified title of that essay 'On the Inconveniences resulting from Being Hanged,' which had appeared in *The Reflector* of 1811 and the 'Works.' There are several modifications, such as the substitution of 'reader' for 'Editor,' and the omission of some passages, most notably the opening paragraphs and the account of Shakespearean executions.

'On the Custom of Hissing at the Theatres' (p. 617) had appeared originally in *The Reflector* and was not reprinted by Lamb. Several paragraphs are omitted and certain verbal alterations made.

'On Burial Societies' (p. 620) is the first part of a contribution to *The Reflector* which was also given in the 'Works.' The original opening is slightly modified.

'Character of an Undertaker' (p. 629), though here given separately, is the second part of the essay just referred to. The introductory paragraph ascribing it to an early eighteenth-century writer is omitted.

Turn we now from Elia to the volume in which he was so liberally represented thus early in his fame as an essayist. Though I say the volume, there are really two volumes—biblical twins to all appearance, but for one small difference, from the risible frontispiece to the imprint on p. 768: 'London: Printed by A. Apple-gath, Stamford-street.' They were, it is evident, printed at the same time, though ten years separated their publication; the 'new edition' was but the old with a fresh title-page—a custom of the trade with which the publishers of to-day are not wholly unfamiliar.

The first of these volumes to come into my hands has a title-page worded and displayed as follows :

THE LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER,

CONSISTING OF
SEVERAL THOUSAND
OF THE BEST

JOKES, WITTICISMS, PUNS, EPIGRAMS,
HUMOROUS STORIES,
AND
WITTY COMPOSITIONS,
IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE,
intended as
FUN FOR THE MILLION.

—
A NEW EDITION.
—

LONDON :
PRINTED FOR SHERWOOD, GILBERT, AND PIPER,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

Price 7s. 6d. Bound.

—
1835.

It is of interest to have the title at full length because the fact that no Lamb enthusiast has hitherto examined it suggests it something of a rarity. After finding how notably the volume was linked with Lamb, I at once sought to discover when the earliest edition was issued, and, secondly, whether a copy of that earliest edition was obtainable. I was successful in both quests. From *The London Magazine* I found that the book was first published in December 1824, and—thanks to the friendly offices of one who worthily carries on the tradition established by his father, that poet-critic-publisher-bookseller and kindliest of bibliophils who has been called the Complete Bookman—sooner than I had dared to hope I came to be possessed of a copy of that first issue. Collation of the two volumes showed that, but for differing title-pages, they were identical; the Lamb matter had not, as I had thought might possibly be the case, been added after his death to the 'new edition.' The original title is yet wordier than that of 1835. Thus it runs :

THE
LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER

BEING THE ENTIRE WORKS OF

Momus, Jester of Olympus ; Democritus, The Merry Philosopher
of Greece, and their Illustrious Disciples,

BEN JONSON, BUTLER, SWIFT, GAY, JOSEPH MILLER, Esq.
CHURCHILL, VOLTAIRE, FOOTE, STEEVENS, WOLCOT,
SHERIDAN, CURRAN, COLMAN, AND OTHERS :

TRANSLATED INTO OUR VERNACULAR ENGLISH TONGUE,

BY JOHN BULL, Esq.

With numerous Additions, Interpolations, and Improvements, by
the Editor, and different Branches of the Bull Family.

'Laughing is the high prerogative of man, and that sublime
and noble quality which distinguishes him from the brute creation.
Those who cannot laugh gracefully, heartily, and by the hour
at a time, scarcely ought to be ranked among the human species.
The sayings of Momus, the writings of Democritus, and the attic
works of Joe Miller, should, therefore, be studied in our Universities
and Tap-rooms, Palaces and Cottages, Drawing-rooms
and Kitchens, and not only for health and pleasure but from due
regard to the dignity and honourable distinction of man.'—G. A.
STEEVENS.

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY SHERWOOD, JONES, AND CO. PATERNOSTER ROW ;
JOHN ANDERSON, JUN. EDINBURGH ; J. CUMMING, DUBLIN ; AND
TO BE HAD OF ALL DEALERS IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE.

Price 10s. 6d. bound.

1825.

This edition was subsequently found buried in the British
Museum catalogue under its pseudonym ; the later one is not to be
found there. The front cover of the original edition is decorated
with a gilded wreath around a laughing face ; that of the later one
is plain. Each edition has by way of frontispiece a capital steel-
engraving lettered 'Veluti in speculum !' and representing a group
of five laughing faces ; such laughers, too, as cannot be looked
upon without an instant responsive twitching of the risible muscles,
so happily has the anonymous artist transferred to his work that

very infection which is one of the subtlest qualities of unforced laughter.

The ten-page preface, penned presumably by a devotee of the drama, is denominated 'Prologue,' and the first two pages or thereabouts run as follows :

' Gentle Reader, We present thee with a volume of examples of WIT. Whatever be thy humour, its contents must please thee even in spite of thyself. Whatever be thy diseases of mind, thou wilt here find medicine for all of them—antidotes to bad weather, dull neighbourhoods, contrary winds, protracted remittances, chronic disorders, lawsuits, gout, scolding wives, drunken husbands, and all the numerous *et caeteras* in the catalogue of life's miseries. With this volume in thy hands, thou mayst always enjoy "the soul's calm sunshine," and be a stranger to ennui, hypochondria, the blue devils, and devils of all colours, which would disturb thy repose and sense of well-being.

' Talk of the Philosopher's Stone, Fortunatus's Wishing-cap, and the diminutive Gianticide's Invisible Coat, these are mere baubles, when compared with this book, for thou wilt be cheerful, merry, and without any wants, while thou hast in thy pouch or pocket this unfailing and omnipotent talisman. "I would rather," said a profound philosopher, "have been born with a cheerful disposition, than heir to ten thousand a-year," and he might have said twenty or fifty thousand ; for what is wealth without that healthful state of mind, which this golden volume will infallibly ensure ? THIS BOOK IS THEREFORE WORTH TWENTY THOUSAND A-YEAR ; and its possessor may look down with pity on the man, however wealthy, who nevertheless lacks this treasure. Before breakfast, it will create good spirits for the day ; after dinner, it will promote digestion and healthful secretions ; and after supper, it will so weary thy muscles and exercise thy diaphragm, that repose, sound and sweet, will be the certain companion of thy pillow.

' Momus passed a few centuries in Greece, where he specially dispensed his favours to the lively sons of Attica. He thence crossed into Italy, where the monk's cowl so disgusted him, that he quitted that country for France, and dwelt there till the return of the Bourbons, when, to escape the thraldom of dulness, he took passage in a steam-boat for England. During the last seven years he has been frisking it between Bath, Cheltenham, Leamington, Brighton, Hastings, Buxton, Harrowgate, Sidmouth, and other favoured seats of British gaiety. In these jaunts, however, he passed through London, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, and other dens of care, and taking

pity on the wretched inhabitants, his godship inspired two Editors of the genuine race of the Bulls to construct this work, to cheer and enliven the present gloomy existence of so many members of their family.

'Having received their commission, which authorised them to destroy the hags of melancholy, and to sink, burn, and overwhelm by suitable reaction all the forms of mental disease described by Haslam, or suffered by preaching and praying zealots, thrifty misers, swallowers of quack medicines, lawyers' clients, and other victims of misguided reason, they resolved to call a COUNCIL OF WRITERS; but Dr. Walcot (*sic*) being dead, they could hear of none except George Colman, whose stock was either exhausted, or forestalled by the purveyors of royal amusement. They therefore besought Momus to evoke a council of his deceased favourites from the Shades, and fixed upon Salisbury-plain for the place of rendezvous. The god, on hearing this, burst into a roar of laughter, telling them that the area of Stonehenge would more than suffice. To this lone place the wits of other times one night were summoned, temporarily invested with an unsubstantial garb, resembling in appearance their mortal forms, and were brought into the presence of the Editors. The latter might have felt alarmed, but the numbers in attendance were few, and instead of the usual groans of ghosts, incessant peals of mirth alone were heard. These at length subsided, when Cervantes demanded "*the business of the two knaves who had brought him back to this sorry world.*" One of the Editors then named the commission which he and his colleague had received, on which the whole assembly burst into a provoking fit of laughter; till VOLTAIRE was heard inquiring, in a sarcastic tone, "*What is that to us? We have bequeathed legacies, which mortals may use if they think proper.*" "True," said the second Editor, "but we want the test of true wit, and your several opinions of its essence and nature." Fresh peals of laughter followed this question, and a full hour elapsed ere silence could be obtained. Several of the phantoms then exclaimed together, "Why trouble us on this subject? why not consult our works?"'

In effect, of course, that is what the editors have done. Sterne, Rochefoucauld, Swift, Pope, Dryden, Addison, Buckingham, Dennis, Sir William Temple, Johnson, Locke, Goldsmith, Butler, Young, Selden, Hume, Lord Kames, and Kant, are all made to respond, each of them repeating some pertinent passage from his own work. Then

'several of the assembly sought at once to deliver their opinions, but before the point of precedence could be adjusted the time

limited for their absence from the Shades expired. The sunbeams now touched the eastern horizon, and the shadowy congregation disappeared in an instant.'

And so we win to the closing passages of the lengthy 'Prologue':

'Thus, gentle reader, have we, the Editors of this volume, enabled thee to benefit at thine ease by the discourses uttered by these luminaries of wit at the solemn hour of night, in obedience to preternatural power. Who shall decide when such doctors disagree? Thou wilt doubtless remark the discrepancies of opinion existing among the hallowed dead, and wilt hesitate, ere presumption shall make thee arbiter among them, by rashly deciding where wit is and is not. Our self-love induces us to believe, that there is no part of our collection which may not take shelter under one or other of the great authorities composing this illustrious convocation. We have endeavoured "to be all things to all men, that we might by any means win some." Judge not, therefore, of the contents of our volume by the extent of thy reading, nor by thy own bright conceptions, for that which is familiar to thee may be new to others; and thou shouldst moreover remember that wit, like music, seldom becomes old, unless it be really good.'

'Neither let the refinement of thy taste be in all cases a criterion of the merit of our labours; for in works of humour, as in those of theology, there must be "milk for babes." Every reader is not endued with a microscopic perception of wit; and the rough jest of a sailor, or the blunder of a rude Irishman, will afford unequivocal delight to many, who would derive little pleasure from the sallies of Congreve or Addison. Yet if thine own disposition incline thee to seek the higher regions of intellectual amusement, thou canst here indulge it. Our book is not a mere collection of jests and stories, or a revived Joe Miller. We have not aimed wholly at exciting the γέλως ἀσθεστος, and cracking the sides of the reader. Thou wilt find treasures of humour drawn from the richest veins of classic ore, in which the voluptuary of wit may revel in perfect enjoyment. And let not thy judgment, if that judgment should happily incline in our favour, be biassed against us, albeit some splenetic railer, obtuse in his perceptions, should say of our book in thy hearing, "There is nothing in it"; but remember the just observation of Sterne, that "it is not in the power of every one to taste humour, however he may wish it; it is the gift of God! and a true feeler always brings half the entertainment along with him," or as Shakspeare expresses it:

"A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue
Of him that makes it."

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‘Lastly, we beseech thee to bear in remembrance that our attempts have been directed to promote thy entertainment and enjoyment; and consequently, shouldst thou even be of opinion that we have failed in our undertaking, we are persuaded that, in thy liberal mind, gratitude for our intention will beget forbearance for our deficiencies, and exempt us from becoming the victims of spleen or petulance.’

That ‘Prologue,’ which is signed ‘For Self and Co., JOHN BULL,’ and is dated from ‘Poets’ Corner, Westminster, May 1, 1824,’ is presented thus extensively for reasons presently to be made apparent. Within the 768 pages of ‘The Laughing Philosopher’ are comprised between three and four thousand items—essays and poems, old ballads, stories, sketches, anecdotes, jests, epigrams and epitaphs, and all the manifold manifestations of wit and humour indicated by the title-pages; things gathered from the highways and the byways of humorous literature from before the time of the Tudor dramatists, by way of that of the Addisonian period to that of *The London Magazine* and Lamb and his circle.

This brings me to the inevitable question as to who it was that compiled ‘The Laughing Philosopher’—a point on which we have so far no direct evidence, though there seems sufficient circumstantial evidence to hazard an interesting surmise. The volume includes two of Thomas Hood’s poems: ‘Moral Reflections Written on the Cross of St. Paul’s,’ which had appeared originally in the introductory ‘Lion’s Head’ of *The London Magazine* for May 1822, and the now familiar ‘Ode on a Distant Prospect of Clapham Academy’ which, somewhat significantly, had only just made its appearance in the *New Monthly Magazine* for April 1824. The significance of this is, that within a month of the first appearance of that ode it was included in our anonymous volume. Though all examples of the work of Charles Lamb and Thomas Hood are given anonymously, a number of the other longer items in the miscellany are duly credited to their authors—George Colman, Dr. Wolcot, Porson, Washington Irving, etc. In 1823 we know, from a letter from Bernard Barton to the publishers of *The London Magazine*, that Hood was engaged in preparing some kind of miscellany. Hood remained associated with that magazine into 1825—probably until Taylor and Hessey disposed of it in August of that year—but his miscellany has not been traceable in Taylor and Hessey’s lists, and it is not improbable that it was done for another publishing firm. It is true that the poem which

Barton proffered for inclusion is not to be found in 'The Laughing Philosopher,' but then its moralising strain was scarcely that of Democritus.

It seems to me, then, by no means impossible that Thomas Hood may have been primarily responsible for the compilation and that he had a certain measure of friendly assistance from Lamb—assistance that may well have gone further than the mere permission to reprint some of his essays; many of the scraps included are such as would undoubtedly have occurred to Lamb, lyrics of past times and bits of old plays, while the last fifty pages of the volume consist of 'Choice Morsels of Dramatic Wit'—extracts quite in the manner of the volumes Lamb had earlier compiled (1808) and the extracts which he contributed to Hone's 'Table Book' in 1827. The majority of the liberal extracts given are from eighteenth-century plays, those of Congreve, Farquhar, Goldsmith and Foote, and it must be admitted that only one of Lamb's loved Elizabethans is drawn upon, the 'Bussy d'Ambois' of Chapman.

Reverting to the 'Prologue,' there is much therein of Elian humour, while the reference to Jack the Giant-Killer as a 'diminutive Gianticide' is verbal coinage very like that of Lamb. That 'Prologue' definitely tells us that two Editors were responsible for the work; perhaps some more fortunate inquirer may be able to establish by something more than surmise who they were, and may succeed in proving or disproving Lamb's authorship of the essays first referred to by tracing the earlier publications from which they were doubtless borrowed for inclusion in the rich miscellany of 'The Laughing Philosopher.'

I may add an irrelevant Lamb 'find' in another book which appears hitherto to have escaped notice. In 'A Biographical Dictionary of Living Authors,' published by Colburn in 1816, are included:

'LAMB, CHARLES, was born in London in 1775, and educated at Christ's Hospital. He is at present a clerk in the India-house, and has published,' etc.

'LAMB, Miss, sister of the preceding, has published,' etc.

This is probably the earliest appearance in a work of reference of literature's immortal brother and sister.

THE TROUBLE AT TOTTON CORNER.

BY H. T. SHERINGHAM.

THE fact of the matter is that we—as a temporary sojourner in a considerable number of years I venture to include myself among the complainants—have been made to appear ridiculous. They have been laughing at us wherever the British flag floats in the breezes, directed by that influential organ *The Hourly Radio*. ‘Parish Councillors Still Running?’—that headline alone was enough to seal our fate. As for the others—but we, in our corporate capacity, cannot bear to speak of them. For what we say in our individual haste printer’s ink is not a suitable medium. It has, however, been decided that something *must* be said, and that Truth, alleged to be mighty, must if possible prevail, and to me has been committed the task of saying it.

I approach the task not unwillingly. I owe debts of gratitude to the place such as temporary sojourners ‘in the season of the year’ are apt to amass, and the story, moreover, has its own interest. Whether I can make this last statement good depends on the luck that perches on a fountain-pen. Anyhow, I will try.

I.

My own very small connexion with the business began when I reached the bridge—trains not fitting very well, I had got out at Elmhaven Junction and was walking the seven miles with my lighter paraphernalia, instead of waiting for the afternoon connexion. It is a lonely, lovely road to Oldborough, passing only one hamlet, Garth Furrow, about two miles from the station, and then never a house till you come to the outskirts of Oldborough. The bridge lies about half-way, and it forms the middle point of the sharp double turn known as Totton Corner.

As said, I reached it, and so plunged—no, that’s the wrong word—so was insinuated into the piece of local history which has caused so much amusement. As I drew near I noticed a small runabout two-seater, which was drawn up to the left of the road on the hither side of the bridge. Its owner was on the bridge gazing at the farther wall.

As I came on to the bridge he spoke. 'Tush!' was his remark, delivered in a loud and somewhat indignant tone.

Not being prepared with a relevant answer I kept silence. Whereupon he continued: "'Tush" was what I said, and I mean tush.'

'By all means,' I assured him, as politely as I could.

'It's more than tush,' he said. 'Look at that!'

I looked. There was a biggish cavity in the bridge wall, and part of the parapet had been broken away. 'Something run into it?' I suggested.

He turned and looked at me. A pleasant-faced, middle-aged man of outdoor type, a district surveyor perhaps, to judge from his appearance and present occupation. 'Three times in the last half-year, if you'll believe me,' he said. 'And now it's got to be mended again.'

'An awkward corner,' I suggested mildly.

'Oh, it isn't the *corner*,' he said impatiently.

'Isn't it?' I said. It was hard to sustain my end of the conversation in a convincing manner.

'Corners don't matter, if you *treat* 'em as corners,' he went on. 'I'd back myself to drive round here every day for a century without doing any damage. But these fools—they treat it as if it was a blooming churchyard.'

'A *what*?' I murmured in feeble astonishment.

'If you'll believe *me*'—he looked at me with sternness—'they have the face to put it down to *spirits*.'

'Well, I *have* heard, I think, that taken in excess . . .' I felt that caution was my best guide.

He caught me up. 'Oh, not whisky—I wish it was. The other sort of spirits—ghosts.'

I am afraid I just gaped at him. Somehow the idea of ghosts damaging a bridge in such a way could not find a real footing in my mind. He saw my difficulty, I think, for he explained. 'A black horse, or a coach and four, or something of that kind, which chases them at dusk and makes them run into the bridge. That's what they all say.'

'Oh!' I commented with continued caution.

'It's perfectly ridiculous,' he went on. 'And the expense . . . three times in the half-year . . . and these Ratepayers' Associations all on their hind legs . . . County Council . . . *Blankshire Advertiser* . . . tomfool letters . . .' he tailed off into vague, indignant murmurings.

I maintained my policy of caution till he became more definite. 'It's the Parish Council's business,' he asserted presently.

'Is it?' I said.

'Yes,' he reiterated with warmth. 'They try to get out of it—anyhow old Farson does—by saying it's roads. But it *isn't* roads. It's—Lord knows what it is, but it *isn't roads*. I shall make representations, the strongest representations. A public nuisance, and it's got to be abated.'

'A matter for the Education Committee?' I ventured.

'Fat lot of good education—when it teaches 'em to talk that rot. If they didn't talk it there wouldn't be that hole in the bridge. They've got to stop it, that's what they've got to do.'

'How do you think they'd better set about it?' I ventured.

'That's their business,' he replied firmly, 'and I shall tell 'em so. Are you going on? Let me give you a lift.'

I thanked him very much and got into the car. During the few minutes occupied by the journey to the cross-roads just outside Oldborough, where he dropped me, he continued his exposition of the affair, and, finding that my prospective host was an esteemed member of the Parish Council, he urged me to persuade him to do his duty, whatever that might be. I confess that when we parted we were no nearer to a clear understanding on that point than when we met. But I readily promised to do what I could. I felt, indeed, a good deal of interest in the matter, for it looked like bringing something new into the sober daily round. A Parish Council abolishing superstition, or perhaps abating a ghost—it was an attractive notion.

II.

'Please, Mr. Chairman, what is this matter *re*?' The speaker asked his question with great dignity. 'Isn't it *re* roads? And in that case isn't it the business of the Rural District Council?'

The strong representations had been made and the Oldborough Parish Council was now face to face with the problem of Totton Corner. By virtue of my friendship with a member I was a privileged unit in an interested audience, and so am able to give an abstract of the proceedings. The report which appeared in the *Blankshire Advertiser* was, designedly perhaps, somewhat meagre, and it did not go into details.

'I am advised'—the chairman selected his words with care—'that this is a question which falls within our competence. But

I will ask the clerk to read the communication which has been addressed to us by the surveyor. Afterwards, Mr. Farson, you can raise the point as to the responsible authority.'

Mr. Harvey, the elderly clerk, gave an extra polish to his round spectacles, rose to his feet, and read the following epistle with an admirable lack of emphasis :

' The Clerk, Oldborough Parish Council.

' August 18.

' SIR.—May I ask you to bring the following matter before your Council at its next meeting ? Three times in the past half-year the bridge at Totton Corner, which lies within Oldborough Parish, has been seriously damaged by wheeled traffic colliding with the parapet on the north side, and now further damage has been done to it, this making the fourth occasion on which repairs have been called for.

' I need not point out that constant renovations of this kind involve the ratepayers in great expense, and the Council will recognise the advisability of putting a stop to such a series of so-called accidents.

' This, I am advised, it can easily do by convincing the inhabitants of Oldborough of the absurdity of keeping ancient superstitions alive in the twentieth century, and I beg to request that the Council will take immediate steps to prevent a recurrence of the nuisance.

' I am, Sir, yours, etc.,
J. GRASSINGHAM, Surveyor.'

Mr. Harvey sat down, and the chairman wiped his eyeglass before speaking. In fact the whole Council for a few silent minutes literally or metaphorically wiped spectacles, at which I was not altogether surprised.

At last, however, the chairman (who in his private capacity is Colonel Garnet Oldershaw, R.G.A., retired) felt able to proceed. ' This, ahem ! communication has now been laid before the meeting. It is of a somewhat unusual character, and I do not remember that anything like it has come before us in the past. I do not think, however, that for that reason we are entitled to give it other than careful consideration. I am not prepared myself at this stage to express a definite opinion as to the justice of Mr. Grassingham's contention, but I feel that we ought to go into the matter, and I shall be glad if members of the Council will say what they think about it.'

For an appreciable time members of the Council continued

spectacle-wiping. My neighbour chuckled. 'Fairly put the wind up 'em,' he murmured in my ear. I looked at him deprecatingly. The matter somehow seemed too big for mere laughter. He was a cheerful-looking young fellow with a soldierly appearance. I had, I thought, seen him about the place, but I did not know his name. He mistook my semi-apologetic glance, I fear, for sympathy—perhaps I did not do it very well—for he chuckled again in a manner which was hearty enough for the pair of us.

But luckily a stirring in public affairs saved me from a false position. Mr. Farson rose to his feet. 'Mr. Chairman,' he said, 'I beg to move that this matter is *re* roads, and that it be referred back to Mr. Grassingham, with a letter saying that the Council is at a loss to understand his communication.'

'I beg to second that,' said a voice from the second row—I could not identify its owner. 'It's Newborough, that's what it is. Just because they've stolen all our trade and grown, they think they can insult us like this. We may not have grown, but we were a parish before they were anything. They don't like old things, that's what it is.'

There was a decided murmur of approval at this expression of opinion, but for some little time no more definite evidence of the Council's view. At last the chairman rose: 'It has,' he said, 'been proposed and seconded that the matter be referred back to the surveyor. But before putting the motion, I feel that we ought to discuss it. Perhaps Mr. Shakerley would give us the benefit of his view.' The chairman fixed his gaze upon an elderly gentleman in the front row, whose object seemed to be to efface himself from public attention, but who eventually yielded to the persuasion (in some degree, physical) of his neighbours and raised himself slowly to an apologetic but more or less upright posture.

'I'm sure I don't know, Mr. Chairman,' he said in a doleful voice, 'but my father always said he saw it, and *his* father before him, and *his* father—it's sort of run in our family.' Mr. Shakerley looked sorrowfully round for sympathy and support.

'Didn't you see it yourself?' came a question from a corner.

'Somebody asks if I didn't see it myself,' he echoed with a semblance of indignation. 'No, I didn't. I didn't *wait* to see it. And *you* wouldn't either.' He directed an almost angry glance at the corner.

'Who ran into the bridge?' This was another voice, a mocking voice, quite from the background.

'Mr. Chairman, I appeal to you . . .' Mr. Shakerley was a picture of protest.

The chairman rose portentously. 'This is a Parish Council meeting,' he said sternly. 'If there are any more interruptions from members of the *public*, I must take what steps are necessary to preserve order.' The silence which followed was so profound that I could hear my neighbour's shoulders shaking. Presently the chairman resumed speech. 'Well, Mr. Shakerley, may we take it that you oppose Mr. Farson's resolution on the grounds, on the grounds, ahem . . ?'

'Oh no, Mr. Chairman,' said Mr. Shakerley in hurried distress, 'I wouldn't *oppose* anything. You asked me what I thought, and I'm sure I don't know, but my *father*, and *his* father . . .' he tailed off into silence.

'Mr. Chairman'—a crisp voice broke in upon what threatened to be another pause—'it seems to me that we're not getting much forrader. We all know that there've been stories about the place, and *my* opinion is that the surveyor is quite right to make a protest.' A murmur, scarcely cordial, greeted this bold statement, but the speaker continued unafraid. 'I speak my mind, I do, and *I repeat* that the surveyor is quite right. Of course I don't believe in these things, but apparently there are some people who *do* believe in them—or whose father's father did,' he interpolated aggressively—'and that seems to me a disgrace to the parish.' Mr. Simpkins, the champion of common sense, paused for breath. He was a sturdy figure, inclined to stoutness, and I remembered having seen him clad in the apron of commerce. I looked at Mr. Shakerley, but could see very little of him. His capacity for shrinking into himself amounted almost to genius.

The chairman asked whether Mr. Simpkins had any alternative proposal to make, reminding him that there was only one motion so far before the meeting.

'Well, Mr. Chairman,' said Mr. Simpkins, 'I think we ought to do *something*.' His tone became more hesitating. 'How would it be if we put the matter into the hands of the police ?'

The chairman, however, expressed doubt as to whether the question was properly a police affair. 'It's *re* roads,' came in determined accents from the direction of Mr. Farson.

Another member rose with a suggestion. This was no other than my own worthy host, who is the staunchest of Churchmen. 'I would propose,' he said in a conciliatory manner, 'that the Council asks the Vicar to look into it. You see, it's rather outside

ordinary routine, and, properly speaking, it seems to me to be his Reverence's affair. If he took his cassock and surplice, and the big Bible from the pulpit . . .'

'And the choir,' interjected another member.

'And the bell-ringers,' exclaimed a third eagerly.

But Mr. Simpkins stamped heavily on these ideas. 'I don't call that *doing* anything,' he said. 'It would make things worse. Seems to me too many people believe in the nonsense already. And anyway the Council's action ought to be undenominational. Romish practices, that's what some of you seem to want. Why, if the parsons had their way . . .' The chairman gently reminded him that he tended to wander from the subject.

Mr. Simpkins handsomely acknowledged the divagation, apologised, and finally made a concrete proposal. 'I beg to move that a sub-committee of not less than five be appointed to go into the matter and report that there is no such thing.'

Again the chairman had to intervene. 'I, ahem! agree with you, Mr. Simpkins, as to the result of such a sub-committee's investigations, but, as a matter of procedure merely, I would suggest that your motion end with the words "and report"! We could not, I think, properly instruct a sub-committee to reach a definite conclusion in advance.'

Mr. Simpkins agreed to this alteration, and the amendment was seconded, put to the meeting, and carried with only one dissentient, the indomitable Mr. Farson. After that a sub-committee of five was appointed, Mr. Simpkins himself being the first selection, and my host the next. It was noticeable that two or three members, whose names were suggested, expressed their strong unwillingness to serve, and they were accordingly excused.

'Nearly all of 'em believe in it,' said my cheery young neighbour, as we eventually filed out of the room. 'It's one of the best jokes I ever came across.' And really I hardly felt able to reprove him.

The report of the meeting which appeared in the *Blankshire Advertiser*, by the way, is worth quoting as a model of journalistic discretion. It ran thus:

'OLDBOROUGH.—At the meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday a letter was read from the Surveyor calling attention to the recurring damage to the bridge at Totton Corner. After some discussion it was decided to appoint a special sub-committee to investigate and report.'

My host's private opinion is also worth quoting, perhaps. He expressed it to me later that same evening. 'What on earth a special sub-committee can do about it, I don't know. I hope it won't send the rates up, that's all.' His tone suggested a gloomy uncertainty as to this, and he seemed so worried that I refrained from rubbing it in, merely entreating him to let me know what should happen if and when the sub-committee took any action.

III.

As a matter of fact he did not do so. It was *The Hourly Radio* that put me in possession of the next piece of the story. 'Amazing Story from Blankshire' shouted its chief news page one sunny morning in September, some three weeks after the meeting which I have described.

Louder and louder grew the head-lines as my eye travelled down the column. 'Horse of Mystery'—'The Bridge of Doom'—'More Things in Heaven and Earth'—'Proof of a Life Beyond'—and so on. My porridge grew cold as I studied this kinemato-graphic display with the trifling fragments of smaller but more informing print which linked it together.

The special sub-committee had, in fact, investigated, with apparently definite results. Whether it had yet reported was not clear. That did not interest *The Hourly Radio*. Its attention was riveted on 'this grim affair, which will bring back to the mind of everybody those famous lines of the poet,

"Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on
And turns no more his head ;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread."

What had actually happened, or how it all came about, did not seem to be definitely known to the journal. But, through one of its local correspondents, it was in a position to state that an entirely credible body of observers—some local branch of the Psychical Research Society, perhaps—had investigated a case of alleged 'haunting' and had satisfied itself that there were substantial grounds for accepting it as authentic.

A black horse, a strange vehicle akin to a chariot, a mystic

driver—such, tinged with an atmosphere of fire, was the manifestation of another world vouchsafed to the wondering yet intrepid 'researchers.' And it all took place at the hour of midnight 'at a bridge which since the memory of man runneth not to the contrary has been associated in the folklore of the neighbourhood of Oldborough with events beyond normal ken.'

The Hourly Radio does not use many words, but it makes a brave show with what it does use. It left no doubt in the minds of unprejudiced readers that ghostly things had really happened. If the readers inferred therefrom that the end of the world, or the fall of the Government, was at hand, that could not be helped.

I eventually came to my cold porridge in a mood of excited curiosity. Had the sub-committee really seen these things? If so, what had they done, or would they do, about it? And what line would that pleasant-faced surveyor take in regard to his grievance? Would it, after all, be a matter for the Vicar, and the choir, and the bell-ringers? Or would a united and undenominational spiritual assault be made on Totton Corner? The situation was more piquant than ever, and I promised myself a week-end at Oldborough as soon as I could manage it, so as to study the affair on the spot.

I do not think they often blush in newspaper offices. On the next day *The Hourly Radio* contained nothing about Totton Corner except two brief letters, signed respectively 'Woe! Woe!' and 'Ha! Ha!' which set out very opposite opinions concerning the moral to be drawn from it.

But on Thursday came the icy blast which has, so to say, withered the bud of our promised fame.

'The Joke of the Year' stared at me from the front page, and 'As we fully expected,' began the 'story,' 'the black horse of Oldborough has turned into an old grey mare.' With a forgetfulness of things past which I could almost find it in my heart to admire—so shameless was it—the paper now treated the episode from the standpoint of the consistent unbeliever who has laughed all the time.

And I soon saw why. Let other headings enable my readers to see too. 'A Blankshire Humorist,' was one. 'Borrowed old Dobbin,' was another. 'Luminous Paint,' was a third, 'Tantivy Chase' a fourth. But it was the last which reached the climax. 'Parish Councillors Still Running?' asked the journal with shocking hilarity.

Summarised, the account of the affair was that the sub-committee (*The Hourly Radio* had now more or less got the facts) had set out to abate the ghost as instructed, that some practical joker had driven furiously up at midnight in a faked equipage adorned with luminous paint, and that the sub-committee had not waited to see any more, but had made for home at its very best pace.

Had it waited—*The Hourly Radio* unkindly suggested that it was at the moment half-way through the next county but one—it would apparently have to some extent justified its existence, and probably have been able to make a satisfactory report, to the great relief of the rates. For next day it was found that in his zeal the would-be phantom driver had overshot the mark, had crashed into the bridge, enlarging a hole already existing in the parapet, and was lying in the ditch with various fractures in his anatomy. The horse, still attached to the remains of a badly damaged dog-cart of the old 'high' type, was found farther along placidly feeding on the grass at the side of the road. Near the bridge were fragments of wood and window-blind material, and similar fragments still hung to the cart—evidence that a good deal of trouble had been taken to produce a satisfactory illusion.

But the chief actor was, it seemed, now in hospital, and his version of the affair was not yet to be obtained.

With nothing in particular to distract public attention—September is one of the holiday months and leading actors, Parliamentary and other, are mostly 'resting'—the Blankshire joke got a very good press, as the saying is. More than one of the cartoonists got hold of it. For instance, one tragic picture, looking ahead to the coming session, showed the Party of the Right galloping headlong to catastrophe breathing fire from its nostrils, while the Party of the Left was fleeing headlong into the gloom. The draughtsman, however, took a certain licence, introducing some calmly superior spectators—the Party of the Centre, which hoped to profit out of the affair.

Altogether the episode received a great deal of publicity. But nowhere, so far as I could see in the papers, were any after-effects recorded. Nor was I informed as to what Oldborough thought about it; and as to any report made by the sub-committee, I must obviously inquire about this myself. So I took a week-end off and went down full of questions.

IV.

'What *can* we do?' asked my host with some petulance. 'We *did* run—I don't mind owning it to *you*—the young devil had really ~~faked~~ it awfully well, and the turn-out looked like nothing on earth. Besides, he'd got hold of some infernal noise-making machine, something like what the Scotch use, and in the pitch dark it was just about the limit.

'Of course, if we'd guessed—but how could we? There may have been a crash, as you say, but if there was it seemed all part of the business. I'd bet a good deal that those newspaper people would have run faster than we did if they'd been there. I'd like to be behind 'em, with a stick!

'Report? Report be d—d! I've sent in *my* resignation, and the others are doing the same. I don't know what Grassingham's going to do, but I *do* know that if there's much more of it there won't be a Parish Council at all. Making us all look fools!

'He? Oh! he's in hospital still, I believe. Fractured a shoulder, and broke a leg too. Had enough practical joking to last *his* time, I should say.

'Yes, it *has* been discussed whether somebody couldn't prosecute. But what for? I asked my lawyer, and he said the only offence he could see was driving to the public danger without lights. That would be a matter for the police. But he wasn't at all sure whether a clever barrister couldn't prove that all that luminous paint stuff *was* lights. Anyway it showed enough. And then there was the question of evidence. The police could only proceed on information given, and who's going to give it? I know very well *I'm* not, and the others say the same. You know what they put in the papers about cases when it says "Laughter in Court." Why, there'd be nothing else but laughter. We've had all of that we want, I can tell you.

'What we want now is for the blessed affair to simmer down. It won't be forgotten in *our* time, I expect, but before I die I hope folks will find something else to talk about now and then.

'Shakerley? It doesn't matter what *he* says. He wasn't there. Seems to me it was a good deal his fault too. Oh well, he *says* that there was more in the affair than met the eye. Quite enough met *my* eye. Wish it had met *his*! He wouldn't have wanted any more. And the infernal newspapers have been worse still. . . .'

That was all I got for my week-end so far as information was concerned. There comes a point when you realise that that mute creature the oyster has, on occasion, a cutting edge.

V.

It was pure chance that gave me the other view of the trouble at Totton Corner.

I had to run down to the pleasant south-coast town of Cockle-mouth on family business about three weeks later, and after a morning among many documents I lunched and then walked down to the front for an afternoon of autumn sea air.

There was the usual gathering of promenaders, mostly elderly folk of the placid 'retired' type, and also a certain number of bath-chairs occupied by convalescents. Cockle-mouth is much in request as a restorer of health.

My eyes took the scene in without noticing details much, and then suddenly from one of the bath-chairs a face which seemed not wholly strange looked at me. And as it looked I saw just a gleam in it which confirmed my idea.

'Haven't we met somewhere?' I said.

'Have we?' replied the face's owner without undue enthusiasm.

'Surely,' I insisted. And then I remembered. 'Yes, at Old-borough, on a certain historic occasion. You jolly nearly made me laugh out loud.' For this was my young soldierly friend who had been so much amused when the Parish Council discussed the ghost problem. But he was looking rather different from his former self.

His silence assented to my claim. 'Have you been ill?' I asked.

'Oh, a bit of a tumble,' he said briefly. 'Can't get about much yet.'

Then it suddenly dawned upon me. I had, of course, heard a name, but had not connected it with a personality. 'Why,' I began, 'was it you who . . . ?'

'Yes, confound you, it was,' he broke in abruptly, 'though I don't know what business it is of yours.'

I apologised, acknowledging that my interest in the affair had outrun my discretion. His face relaxed its severity a little, and a gleam of the humour I remembered came into it. 'I heard,' I added, 'that they thought of prosecuting for driving to the public danger without lights, but that they were not sure how far

luminous paint could be proved to be good in law.' He laughed a little at this and I was encouraged to go on.

'What I don't understand,' I said, 'is how you came to run slap into the bridge just at the same place. Sort of judgment, wasn't it?'

He pondered some time before answering. Then he came to an evident decision. 'You're a writer, aren't you?' I acknowledged it. 'Well, I'll *tell* you. You may be able to undo some of the mischief. I'm really sorry now for being such a fool, and I wish they'd laugh at me rather than at those other poor chaps. The joke's on *me* really, not on them—if there *is* a joke.'

'How do you mean?' I asked.

'Well, I started out to have a joke with them—everybody knows that. But when they saw me I wasn't after them—I was running away, and so was the horse.'

'Running *away*?' I echoed.

He nodded and his face became very grave. 'Yes, running for dear life. *It was after me.*'

'It?' I murmured.

'Lord knows what *it is*,' he returned. 'I don't. All I know is, it gallops—imagine the blackness of night galloping after you, I can't describe it any better. I hear it in my dreams still.' He shuddered a little. Then he recovered himself. 'Well, see what you can do about getting the real truth made public. Though I'm afraid no one will believe it.'

And so we parted. As for the truth—I've done my best. But it's late in the day, and after all it helps no one.

**UNPUBLISHED LETTERS FROM GLADSTONE
TO MY FATHER.**

EDITED BY BLAYNEY COLE.

II.

HIS eyes cause him trouble.

Ln., Dec. 6, 1837.

. . . It is indeed too true of me in general that I can maintain but an occasional and intermittent intercourse with my friends—excepting only those I meet in the House of Commons. At present I have an additional and serious impediment in the weakness of my eyes, which though, thank God, not amounting to disease, has drawn down upon me the command from medical authority not to read or write more than a quarter of an hour at once. After this you will understand my brevity. I hope you come to town in Spring and that we may thus make up all deficiencies via you; and this I say while deeply feeling with you the necessity and advantage of residence, above all, for Irish landlords.

In the meantime I am glad to think that my thoughts oftener alight upon my friends, than my pen is busied in addressing them. And your remarks on Ireland I do not pass unobserved.

We are to have decision probably to-night on Mr. Blewitt's Resolution to-morrow on the Pension List Committee¹—Friday on the postponement of Buller's Bill for altering the Grenville Act.²

On travel bent. A glance at the political situation, and a dissertation on an 'Iron he has in the fire,' namely, a book on the relations between Church and State.

London, July 20, '36.

Probably on Saturday next I quit England for five months or more; perhaps you will fire a shot at me when I am at Rome,

¹ On December 8, 1837, both Blewitt and Buller voted with majority on a Pension List Division. Buller's motion, to which W. E. G. referred, moved the order of the day for resuming the debate respecting the Bodmin election, which was, however, thrown out. It may be mentioned that Buller had also been president of the committee which inquired into the election law of Ireland (there had recently been conflicting decisions) and introduced a Bill on the subject in the summer of 1837.

² This Act, carried by George Grenville in 1770, transferred the trial of election petitions from the whole House to a Select Committee.

which will be, I hope, in the latter part of November and in December. My first destination is to Ems with my sister ; to remain there till about the end of September, and then turn boldly my face towards the southern sun, explore perhaps Calabria and Sicily, and lastly repair to the treasure-house of knowledge, warnings and sentiments, and associations, which once rested on seven hills.

As to the political world we are as yet *in force* ; whether the Government will or will not overthrow the Municipal Bill, the Tithe Bill may be considered I suppose as destined to pass, the leaders of our party having, upon a view of all the circumstances of the case, deemed it best for the Church of Ireland that it should do so. The Government are wretchedly feeble, and perceptibly more so than in any former year. They do not now attempt to carry a Bill through the House of Commons which the Conservative body in general oppose. But I neither pretend to know whether they *will* last as an Administration, nor whether it is desirable that they should do so.

I have got an iron in the fire, now nearly red hot, upon which a word. It threatens to be nothing less than a book upon the relations of Church and State ; in which I attempt to argue out the matter from the very root of the composition of a body politic and to arrive, by regular inferences, at the exclusive support of the Catholic Church as the only thoroughly satisfactory basis of State Religion. After considering the theory I go to the history, and inquire in what measure the Reformation gave rise to (for it did not proceed upon) the doctrine of private judgment. How, with that doctrine, was naturally connected the legislative practice of toleration ; how, out of its excess and its abusive interpretation and application, have risen those fearful dangers and disorganising principles which now immediately threaten the principle of all alliance between the Church and the State. Lastly I have a chapter upon the probable results of the dissolution of that alliance should it ever take place. This is a great subject, of the very deepest interest and importance, and I have handled it—perhaps rashly—but at all events most rudely (? crudely) and inadequately ; but my object is, with God's blessing, to stir the question, and set a few more men's minds at work upon it. . . . I hope that the book may be brought out during the Autumn. For the present I do not doubt you have had quite enough of it.

. . . Tupper has been publishing a book this year called 'Proverbial Philosophy' which seems to have been very well received. He has also brought forth an ode on the Coronation—which by the by afforded the finest sight I ever saw, and a scene noble beyond description.

This letter speaks of the happiness of my father's married life. Also of a forthcoming article on the Irish Church.

Fasque, Oct. 13, 1837.

. . . To turn to more serious matters, it is very gratifying to me to hear of your happiness, not because I had any apprehension of hearing anything else, but because it is always well to make security doubly sure, and the strongest self-drawn persuasions become yet stronger by the addition of direct testimony. You could give no more convincing proof of the sincerity of your opinion, than desiring its practical application to your friends. As to the generality of them, I imagine that they are fulfilling your wishes with reasonable celerity; at least, we have many friends and acquaintances in common, and I know that out of the circle of mine not *less* than fourteen have during the course of this year donned the married state. I know not whether the habit of opposition in Parliament may have contributed to make me one of the yet remaining exceptions to the general rule. Causes in these matters are very subtle; speculations very hazardous; and, *a priori* reasonings, engendered to excess by the fertility of the brain, vanish utterly away when the appointed time comes. I do not think there is anything in human life (yet I do not speak with the authority of a practical man) which appears so directly with invisible, that is, with Providential, agency, as the subject we are now upon. There can be none upon which it is of such immense importance to attain a full previous knowledge of character, and to form a most anxious and extended estimate of consequences. Yet (still speaking as a speculatist) it would seem as if the former were acquired, in the cases of the young, rather by intuition than experience; and, as to the latter! not Paley himself, who says that when a highwayman puts a pistol to your breast and demands your purse, you are to *calculate* whether on the whole it will be more useful to society that you should shoot or surrender, would maintain that a man in love could have presence of mind enough to draw a map so large and accurate, in which should be all the wants and all the . . . of his life and the . . . so difficult it is here, as it is in other matters, to comprehend those processes in which both the understanding and the feelings are at work, and to discern the manner of an alliance between two powers, which are generally represented to be hostile, yet upon their harmony depends human excellence and happiness. Now I have dosed you well with the rudiments of an *ex post facto* law on this subject. . . . I have . . . an article about the parliamentary prospects of the Irish Church, which I was informed was too late for the October number; nor do I know how I can

characterise it so as to enable you to read (or avoid) it, otherwise than by its remarkable stupidity.

He once more refers to his book on Church and State, and enlarges on a scheme for the foundation of a college in Scotland; and speaks of the joy of his domestic life.

Hawarden Castle, Chester.
Dec. 31, 1840.

. . . I do not like to go from this topic (with regard to a late illness of my father, and other kindred matters) into a reference to my book which you so kindly mention. By what I have written, I have found or made a new world of solicitudes and of many solicitudes and of heavy responsibilities for myself, beyond the domestic sphere. I ought, however, to have warned you against the dryness of my second Chapter. The Seventh, if you got so far, you would, I hope, find more readable. I am afraid that on the whole it is rather an infelicitous compound of light and heavy: too ponderous for air, and yet not watertight. I am now busy in preparing an extension of my former book on Church and State, in the shape of a new edition—it will be near or about twice its former bulk; and will, I hope, appear in the end of February or the beginning of March.

I am also much occupied about a College which with some others I am very anxious to see founded in Scotland for the purpose of educating the youth, and in particular the Clergy, of the Episcopal Communion; both classes are at present wretchedly off. James Hope¹ whom you will recollect at Oxford has been my main partner in this scheme. We want to raise at least £25,000. There is also a plan on foot, of which I have heard, for establishing a College in Ireland, for the education of Irish Scripture readers in immediate connection with the Church—this seems to me an admirable design.

You are indeed right in supposing that I am richly blessed in my wife and child, yet how frail is the tenure by which they are held here, how solid that bond by which, unless we obstinately refuse the gift, we may be united together for ever!

Pray give my kindest remembrances to Lady Fanny and be assured that I remain always

Your truly attached
W. E. GLADSTONE.

In haste.

He is overwhelmed with business, together with a host of other matters; yet finds time (*how*, it is a marvel) to write to his old friend.

¹ Hope Scott.

An impending political crisis.

16, Carlton H. Terrace,
Sat. evg., May 8, '41.

The total impossibility of carrying on private correspondence in my circumstances must be my excuse for having deferred, very reluctantly, to notice your letter of the 19th of January. . . . I take up my pen, first of all to thank you for your kindness in sending me an unsolicited donation for our Scotch College. . . . Your letter reminds me that with all this pretence of business I have little to show for it, and that I have not been active in Parliament. It is true though, I have attended tolerably; but up to Easter from the beginning of the Session I was busied also in completing and carrying through the press my new edition of the *State* in its relations with the Church; which now extends to two volumes, each a little larger than the former single one; and of which every page and almost line touches upon difficult, delicate and controversial matter; a proportionate sensitive and jealous care is required in what would otherwise be the nearly mechanical work of correcting the press. However I grieve and fret at the manner in which my time slips through my fingers; domestic engagements, and these but ill fulfilled, social obligations, and these also very defectively observed, the cares of a household and of furnishing and equipping it, with many other undefined and separately trifling yet jointly material distractions, do hack my time utterly to morsels, such morsels as scarcely allow the mind properly to collect itself for work. . . .

. . . You do me no more than justice in supposing that your description of the Irvingite Chapel would interest me deeply. It is touching indeed to see men longing as these do for that which is indeed the greatest religious want of the age, namely the Catholic idea of Christianity as one objective, permanent, indestructible, nor these alone realised and made palpable and transmissible with security of persuasion from man to man by means of a body, subject, indeed, to human vicissitudes but constructed by the hand of Christ and chartered to the world's end. Of course I mourn that they do not see this want provided for in the Catholic Church historical, and that therefore they have framed to themselves with painful effort a new imitation or effigy of a Catholic Church which may have external or shortlived beauty but cannot live. . . .

Our debate in the House of Commons must . . . terminate in the defeat of the Ministers and in a political crisis.¹ It is said they will even lose Sandwich.

¹ The crisis referred to was over the fiscal question which the Whigs wished to reconstruct.

Labouring at his office ; yet dissatisfied with his 'ignorance' as he is pleased to call it—in matters appertaining to it.

London, Sept. 28, '41.

I snatch a moment which however I can hardly call one of leisure to thank you for your kind letter of congratulation. . . .

My office is one of great labour to one so ignorant in its subject matter of duty as myself ; and to imbue myself properly and gain a real familiarity with it afford me ample and close employment, as I expect, throughout the whole of the recess.

. . . Pusey's last production on Tract No. 90 seemed to me when I read it, on the whole one of the best things that has appeared on the controversies of the last few years. I doubt with you the truth of the story of his having attended any religious ceremony of the Romish [Church].

A barrier to his becoming godfather to my sister. He expresses himself firmly on the question of Anglicanism.

13, Carlton H. Terrace,
July 15, '42.

In reply to your very kind request, I am afraid that there is a difficulty in my becoming Godfather to your child. The Church expects the presence of the Sponsor at Baptism and I could not under present circumstances well cross to Ireland for the purpose. . . .

When I first saw the word Rubicon I really thought it must refer to the Irish Channel. You mean by it, however, the barrier between ourselves and Romanism. In that sense, according to my own deliberate convictions, I should as soon think of crossing the Styx or Phlegethon¹ ; though I am anxious to recognise and appreciate the character of the Church of Christ wherever I can find it, and further whatever specific and peculiar good that system, amidst all its mischiefs, may possess.

He finds his duties both public and private almost beyond endurance.

6, Carlton Gardens,
June 17, '48.

It is indeed seldom that I have the opportunity of exercising with you in any manner the reciprocal offices that ought to belong to an old friendship, and I am sorry to say that I never had less of such facility than now, for both my mind and my time are laden

¹ As many may recall : a river in the lower world, in whose channel flowed flames instead of water.

in an unusual degree with private as well as public cares. . . . I am so often conscious of a wish to be out of the anxieties that attend my path—although many men have more, and heavier—that as one feeling the need of solace and support myself, I can with the less impropriety exhort you in the name of our God and Saviour, to bear up. 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours.' These words I have heard to-day at the grave of a much loved relation.¹ But that great blessedness from their labours is the difference and distinction of the faithful dead from us, and surely we must not snatch at the unripe fruit, we must not seek to grasp it before the time—and further, if we had no labour, we should have nothing from which to rest, no burden to lay down and be at ease. Let us then cheer up and take our toils whatever they may be—yours in one form, mine in another, each as God sees best. . . .

His work is appalling.

6, Carlton Gardens,
May 16, '52.

. . . It is highwater now with me as to work and I scarcely know which way to turn ; my heaps of letters in arrear are appalling, so you must not, indeed I am sure you will not, take brevity for indifference ; as to my pamphlets, I think you have not seen the last about Naples and I am not sure about the first, so I send copies of both—and as you liked the Speech about the University Commission, I likewise send you a few copies which it may interest or amuse you to give away.

On various matters.

6, Carlton Gardens,
Jan. 24, '53.

I fear you know me for a bad correspondent, and I also fear there is little chance of my improvement. You may judge that this is from no defect of will on my part, for I believe you are the only person with whom now for many years past except my own family I have carried on a correspondence unless on what may be termed matters of business. But the duties of my present office for this year are likely to be enormously heavy, and the contest in which I have been involved at Oxford² has so cut up my time that at this moment I am sadly in arrear and can do little more than thank you for your letter and beg you to believe that it is always with interest

¹ Mrs. Robertson—'Aunt Divie' as Gladstone used to call her. This lady was the wife of his uncle, Mr. Robertson, who was his mother's brother.

² He was opposed mainly on the question of differing religious views ; but won the seat.

that I hear from you. . . . I should much like to see Lady Fanny and your children, who must now be well advanced. Even mine are coming on; my eldest boy has been a year at Eton, and my eldest girl at ten years old was taken on Saturday by the Duke of Newcastle to see a play for the first time in her life.

It is with great pleasure that I have during the last quasi-Session made the acquaintance of your brother-in-law, Lord Monck,¹ a very prepossessing person and whose abilities and character will I trust render him a very valuable member of Parliament. It is most kind of you still to continue from time to time your labours upon the translation of my book. Did I send you the last pamphlet I published, a letter to the Bishop of Aberdeen on the functions of laymen in the Church? As you sometimes care to trace my hand, I will tell you that you may find in the last *Quarterly* an article on Count Montalembert's recent work, and in the *Edinburgh* too, of last Spring, in (undecipherable) the temporal power of the Papacy.

God bless you. . . .

He recalls his pleasant Oxford days. In speaking of his efforts—literary and otherwise—there is now and again observable a note of self-depreciation which is not without its winning charm, as coming from a man of his vast attainments. In this letter he speaks also of his children.

11, Carlton House Terrace,
August 13, 1858.

. . . Our pleasant days at Christ Church, here, and on the Continent have left marks upon my memory, never I trust to be obliterated; though it is but seldom I am able to follow up the retrospect they invite.

Perhaps you may say, at any rate, if you do say it, you will say it justly, that I have aggravated this evil by taking upon me duties, or efforts at least, which I was free to omit: and in particular you may cite the work on Homer to which you refer so kindly and of the reception of which you send me so gratifying an account (I cannot make a better return than by advising you, if you open the book, to begin at the third volume which is the least readable). There were many reasons why I should not have undertaken this work, one of them being my insufficient knowledge and want of the true critical faculty, or weakness in it. But I was driven on by a passion for my subject and by a feeling that though I might fail to produce a good book, I might and *should* do good in another way by giving a stimulus to an admirable study, and by helping the pursuers of it with some prepared materials.

¹ Afterwards Governor-General of Canada.

After a few days, for which business will detain me, I expect to go down again to Hawarden (Chester), my brother-in-law's place, where my wife and family are staying. My children too are advancing, though one step behind yours, and much reason have I to be thankful for them. My eldest son is preparing to go to Christ Church and there to tread the old paths so well known to us, in October; and my eldest daughter is about to strike sixteen. I thank you very much . . . for the account of your "belongings," to use the phrase now common, and I pray you particularly to remember me kindly to Lady Fanny when you write. . . .

You will, by the bye, probably see cited in an Article of the next *Quarterly Review* a translation by me of the ode of Horace and Lydia, B. III., Carmen 9. I do not know who is to write the Article but understand it is to be on translations of Horace.

Yours etc.

W. E. GLADSTONE.

11, Downing Street, Whitehall,
June 30, '59.

MY DEAR COLE,—There are twenty good reasons why I should never be made a Peer, and if, as you tell me, it would deprive me of the advantage and pleasure of free and equal intercourse with you, that makes twenty-one.

If in any respect our relative positions have changed, all that may be reversed in the day when the first shall be last and the last first.

I am still in confusion and my election not over, but the last numbers are

Gladstone	870
Chandos ¹	740

With respect to your school, I will most gladly repeat my small testimony of good will if you like it.

Believe me always,

Your very sincere friend,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

[P.S.]—Pray remember me to Lady Fanny when you see her.

O. B. COLE, Esq.,
Hill Side.

This letter was written upon Gladstone being appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Palmerston Ministry, in con-

¹ The Marquis of Chandos, eldest son of the Duke of Buckingham.

sequence of which he had to be re-elected. Rather to his surprise his election was contested. The final figures were :

Gladstone	.	.	.	.	1050
Chandos	.	.	.	.	859

Be it noted that this was the first time Gladstone took office under a Liberal administration.

Some interesting information on this election may be had from Morley's 'Life.'

My father was at this time living the life of an invalid in a doctor's family.

Gladstone's scholar's mind finds refreshment in Homer, in spite of his incessant labours.

11, Downing Street,
May 13, '03.

... The burdens of public life and offices almost entirely suppress private correspondence.

You are most welcome to use in any manner you please my translation of Danté. I have made a translation (some two years ago) of the First Iliad which will shortly be finished with a Preface and Notes, when I hope to send you a copy. I do not know if you ever read Homer now. He is most genial and refreshing [although the average fifth form boy would not perhaps use these exact words!], the perfection of exercise without fatigue [unless plentiful dives by the same boy, into the lexicon might be so called!]

The Princess of Wales¹ is worthy of all your eulogies; most amiable, full I believe of character, very beautiful, and with a singular charm of manner.

In the next letter he asks this puzzling question (I presume my father knew the answer, though it leaves me as ignorant as it did Gladstone!): 'What is the kiss-cribbing that you mention?' but adds on a safer note: 'You have I hope seen Tennyson's "Idylls of the King"; a noble addition to our literature.'

On my father's serious illness—a reply to a letter from my brother :

¹ Queen Alexandra.

Hawarden Castle, Chester,
Nov. 16, 1886.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just received your letter with a deep and mournful interest. Please to say to my dear old friend, if it be right so to speak of him when you receive this letter, that I have never forgotten in the way you mention and trust I never shall. If he be still such as I knew him at Oxford and shortly after there are few who will pass so clear to the greatest account as he.

I daresay he knows the hymn ¹ of which I enclose a copy—if he does not and if you think he would like it pray make it known to him. And you who have watched over him through these long years and are now a solace to his death-bed if you have done your duty by him as I believe, may you have your reward.

I remain, etc.

W. E. GLADSTONE.

The last letter in this little collection is a warm and sympathetic tribute to my father's memory written to my brother, November 29, 1886.

¹ 'Hark! my soul, it is the Lord,' put by Gladstone into Italian; also 'Art thou weary,' translated into Latin by him.

BIRD FOES OF BIRDS.

'THE way of living of the sea-swallow,' says an eighteenth century writer on the skua, 'deserves to be particularly taken notice of: for as he cannot so commodiously plunge into the water, and catch fish, as other aquatic birds, the Creator has appointed the sea-gull to be his caterer, in the following manner: when this last is pursued by the former, he is forced to throw up part of his prey which the other catches; but in the autumn, when the fishes hide themselves in deep places, the merganser supplies the gull with food, as being able to plunge deeper into the sea. . . . Whoever will be at the pains to take ever so slight a view of the wonderful works of the Author of Nature, will readily see how wisely the plan, order, and fitness of things with divine ends, are disposed.'

The wisdom of Gilbert White's contemporary has since been forgotten. Our modern passion for taking sides will not allow us to appreciate the providential feeding of the skua (which is, in plain words, a highwayman) by sea-gulls of various kinds, which we pity as its victims except when they in their turn take to murdering others weaker than themselves. For in normal circumstances birds are the most destructive foes of birds, in much the same way as men are always the worst enemies of mankind.

Except where long persecution of certain species has brought about, as in modern England, an artificial balance with too many small birds and far too few large ones, there is a constant and heavy toll being taken of the small or weak kinds by the strong or aggressive.

Without believing, with Mr. Mortimer Batten, that certain species were created by Providence especially to afford a good food supply to others, we can see clearly that there are two great classes of birds which act as a check on the rest.

The first includes the hawks, and to a less extent the owls and others: its effect is to weed out the unfit from the ranks of more or less adult birds of other species.

The chief members of the second class are crows and gulls, and their mission is ruthlessly to destroy unguarded or badly-concealed nests. It is the fashion to call these latter feathered robbers, or something synonymous with that, but they are not robbers—a jay

which lives on sucked eggs is no more a robber than a swallow or spider-hunting wren is a murderer.

Now that so much interest is taken in birds, a great outcry has been raised in the Press against these two classes of destroyer, and, before any more harm is done through an excess of sentimentality and a heavy deficit of common sense, it is perhaps not too much to hope that a few of the leaders of newspaper-controversy gangs will spend a few minutes in soberly thinking over the position.

To take first the problem of the hawks. It is one which artificial conditions have so far kept out of sight in England, but now that the old estates have mostly fallen to pieces and game-preserving is on the decline, it will become yearly more urgent.

' We only know the last sad squires ride slowly towards the sea,
And a new people takes the land : '

But W. H. Hudson thought it likely that the newcomers would prove even less friendly to birds than the men of the Old Order. Two things, at least, are certain ; that the great estates are vanishing and that the game coverts, where they remain, will in future generally be maintained by money from the towns, instead of by the country land-owners. The farms, on the other hand, are largely passing into the hands of their tenants. This haphazard division of the land will probably be beneficial to the birds, since the interests of the two classes differ so greatly, and organised ways of extermination are much more difficult to carry on among many little estates than on two or three large ones whose owners make common cause.

Among British hawks, the kestrel, sparrowhawk and peregrine are on the whole fully holding their own (the latter in very reduced strength, however), while certain of the rarer species have actually shown a slight increase.

Buzzards and Golden Eagles, at any rate, are both quite definitely commoner in Britain than they were at the opening of the century.

Infinitesimal increases have also occurred in the numbers of the Kite and Montagu's Harrier, and the latter is now said to be common enough in Norfolk to prove a serious menace to the Bearded Tit. It is at least possible that the next generation will see a considerable revival in the number of our hawks, and if this takes place they will undoubtedly begin once more to exact a serious toll from other birds.

This will at once raise the question of the Protectionist attitude towards hawks in general, for there are already two distinct and conflicting opinions on it.

W. H. Hudson would have protected hawks even more strictly than other birds, and though he regretted all our lost species, he mourned for none more deeply than for the great hawks which are gone.

That is one side. The other was very clearly expressed in an article in the *World's Work* (November, 1923), by Mr. T. Gilbert Pearson, President of the National Association of Audubon Societies, one of the most powerful supports of Bird Protection in existence. He says: 'The hawk is a destroyer of bird life and small game. He is very bold and will often attack birds heavier than himself. He should be shot for the protection of other birds.'

Now that seems to me a wholly wrong attitude to take up. A Bird Protection society exists for the protection of all birds, not just a few or even the majority, and if it takes part in or encourages the shooting of any bird at all, what prestige is it likely to retain in checking the destruction of the rest? If English Protectionists adopt this attitude, we shall possibly be faced with the mournful paradox of a bird exterminated by the self-constituted preservers of our bird-life.

The idea of shooting large hawks may seem farcical at present to the English protectionist, for those are the very species he is most strenuously engaged in maintaining. But that under different conditions there is a possibility of heresy in this respect is very clearly shown by the extract I have just quoted from the president of the most powerful American protectionist society, and it is a case where all followers of Hudson will need to make it clear that they protect hawks, not because hawks happen to be rare in England, but because hawks appeal to them.

The Times, in a leader on the subject, has taken up much the same point of view. 'Supervision by experienced ornithologists,' it says, 'is needed in every bird sanctuary, and the members of the more piratical species often need reduction.'

'Even in a sanctuary it is necessary to outlaw certain species,' is also the view of a correspondent of the same paper.

But what in the name of heaven is a bird sanctuary, if certain birds are to be outlawed from it? If that were possible, every single estate with a gamekeeper is a bird sanctuary, and has been ever since game was first preserved there.

The number of species on any gamekeeper's black list is comparatively small, and all other birds are most efficiently, if unintentionally, protected by the constant removal of all their natural enemies and the strict guard kept against indiscriminate human intrusion, especially during the breeding season.

If a bird of prey is to be shot in one wood (which is a game-covert) by a man in velveteens because it kills pheasants, and in the next (which is a bird sanctuary) by a man in uniform because it eats other birds, the unfortunate hawk may be forgiven its dullness in failing to appreciate the essential difference between the two.

There are, into the bargain, two motives for protecting a bird—rarity and attractiveness—which do not always fit in with the schemes of these eliminators of evil-doers.

The Peregrine Falcon, for instance, is rare and extremely handsome, therefore it ought to be strictly protected: yet it is exceedingly destructive to other birds, therefore it should be shot at sight.

It is in fact the best instance of all. There is certainly no handsomer bird, nor any finer to watch, in all the British Isles, and yet there are not many which can equal its efficiency in wholesale destruction.

It is rare now, and therefore the taking of a single young bird from the Great Orme in June, 1923, aroused the volatile wrath of all right-minded protectionists.

From the frequency with which they quite rightly deplore its rarity, these protectionists would evidently like the Peregrine to become commoner, yet they (or others of their party) are only waiting for it to do so in order to take up their guns with Mr. Pearson and shoot it 'for the protection of other birds.'

(Senseless as it sounds, this is not an unfair inference, as will appear from the case of the Hyde Park Magpie outlined below.)

They may at least learn first of all, for the good of their souls, that every Peregrine in the world costs the lives of hundreds of other birds a year for its upkeep, and that every Peregrine in the world is well worth it.

There is a great deal of pleasure to be got out of watching a falcon follow and strike down its quarry, and perhaps for that reason this particular volcano has been allowed to slumber far more generally than the second one, which lately provided a most spectacular eruption in the Press.

Few people can enjoy watching a Jay or a Hooded Crow suck a nestful of eggs, whether it happens to belong to grouse, which should have been preserved till the Twelfth, or to some rare bird which has more than enough of human enmity.

At the present time the lack of a strong enough police force of large hawks has allowed this egg-sucking habit to become far too common and the matter has been brought to the forefront. But that is the fault of men alone, and in particular of the very class of men who are most noisily indignant about it—the hawk-killing, shooting owners of the Scottish moors. There is no serious harm in a certain amount of egg-stealing by crows: it is only that, through the extermination of their natural enemies, what used to be a side-line is now a general means of livelihood among them. It must be remembered that the Crow family is exceedingly intelligent and adaptable, and that it has been proved that even Rooks, when they grow too common, will take to wholesale egg-stealing and worse habits still.

A nation which, like Great Britain, outgrows its food-supply, must obtain more from abroad, but birds in the same circumstances solve the problem by increasing their range of diet.

Furthermore, the victims of the great hawks provided the crows with quite an appreciable supply of easily found carrion, which has now almost ceased.

Another correspondent to *The Times* writes movingly on the iniquities of the Great Black-backed Gulls on the Scilly Isles, describing them as 'monsters' and, later on, 'murderers.' These vile cut-throats, it appears, lie in wait for harmless and respected Puffins or Manx Shearwaters, which are seized at the mouths of their burrows and cruelly done to death.

Such harrowing scenes as these have been taking place in Britain for so long that it would be difficult even to guess when they began. Ages before Man had attained to sufficient culture to write to *The Times* about them the Hoodies and Jays and Carrion Crows were efficiently doing their work of punishing careless bird parents, and the hawks, which were common enough to give the shudders to any reasonably soft-hearted bird-lover, were already butchering thousands of birds a day.

These bird-lovers hold that hawks must be shot if other birds are to be preserved. Yet it seems on this reasoning rather a curious accident that, after the countless centuries in which birds were visited with more hawks and beasts of prey than we can imagine

outside a nightmare, there remains, in spite of all, quite a considerable excess of Robins over Sparrowhawks, and of Blackbirds over Golden Eagles.

By whatever chance it came about, Nature seems to have looked after our bird-life rather surprisingly well in the age-long interregnum between the release of the animals from Noah's ark and the appearance of the perfect protectionist to take upon himself the duty of caring for them as they should be cared for.

It is, if they could only receive sight and use it, the first, and perhaps even the whole duty of bird-lovers to conquer the *human* enemies of birds, and more especially the collector.

The people who are interested in preserving birds are now by fully twenty to one more numerous than those whose pleasure it is to destroy them. Only a rudimentary organisation and a certain amount of hard work are needed in this crudely democratic age to apply that majority to the very useful purpose of preventing egg-collectors from doing any more damage—by confiscating and forbidding private collections, as Hudson suggested.

In the meantime the birds which have so miraculously survived through several million years can perhaps safely be left to look after themselves as far as other bird foes are concerned.

Of all modern trends of mind one of the most widespread and amazing is the belief that the mere warding off of death is a highly desirable object.

Sanitation and other regulations have brought our death-rate down by now to a figure which is filling the world with old people at the expense of youth and vigour (for which there is no longer any room) and the same squeamishness is spreading to our attitude towards wild creatures.

We never see a rheumatically old blackbird, and even the 'Many winter'd crow that leads the clangy rookery home' seems to be a myth—it is at any rate hard to trace any single leader of the flock.

We never hear anybody wonder at the rarity of meeting with a badly mutilated or old and feeble bird at large. There are so few simply because of the elaborate organisation for painlessly disposing of them—that old 'survival of the fittest' law which we so greatly dislike nowadays. But in spite of us that law still applies universally except to man, who has succeeded in ignoring it for the last four generations or so. Our grandchildren, or perhaps our children, will certainly bear the terrible and inevitable

punishment for our misplaced kindness on that score, but surely it is not necessary to extend the same curse of degeneration to the birds also, excepting of course the spoon-fed game which have already learnt through disease the disadvantages of losing their enemies.

Since the writing of this article Messrs. Longmans have published a book by Mr. Lewis R. W. Loyd under the title of *The Protection of Birds : An Indictment*.

In the words of the old Pope's verdict—'Never have I read a worse heretic !' But few of the heresies have the slightest novelty about them ; the book is in the main a repetition of the arguments to disprove which this article was written.

Reviews of the work have been strangely conflicting, but though most of the reviewers took exception to its contemptuous treatment of the late W. H. Hudson, several of them accepted the theory of 'scientific protection' on the strength of Mr. Loyd's plea that Guillemots and other sea-fowl were being exterminated by gulls on Lundy. The only adequate defence of the policy possible is never actually stated by Mr. Loyd, though he seems to have it at the back of his mind and it is made in some of the reviews. This is that the balance of Nature has been so much upset in Great Britain that to let things take their course now would be fatal. Admittedly the balance has been altered, but it has been altered in favour of the birds most often victimised by others, not against them.

As for the danger of the guillemot being exterminated, it is the opinion of some well-known naturalists that if a census of the birds in Britain could be taken it would rank among the dozen commonest species.

The *Indictment* has little to say about hawks, concentrating chiefly on the misdeeds of gulls and crows. In the course of this article it has already been shown that their present notoriety is due to an excessive increase, for which the lack of hawks large enough to act as a check is responsible.

Once the hawks are given protection the balance will right itself automatically.

Another correspondent of *The Times*—for the matter happens to have been extremely well ventilated in its columns lately, and one can illustrate from them only too plainly which way the wind blows—a Londoner, has according to himself 'been wondering how such a robber as the Magpie can be tolerated in Hyde Park' and whether the Bird Sanctuaries Committee introduced it there.

We have no species in all Britain more decorative than the Magpie. His plumage is sharply contrasted and brilliantly glossed, and his slightest movements are more full of unexpectedness and fascination than those of all but some half-dozen among our resident species. He is the only both strikingly coloured and widely familiar member of the highest and most intelligent of all the families and orders. He is, into the bargain, almost the largest wild bird that can expect to make a regular living in the heart of London, and to the people at large probably the most amusing of all.

W. H. Hudson, quite indisputably the greatest bird-lover of our time and already the patron saint of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said (writing of Turtle Doves): 'Still, I would gladly have spared many of these . . . for the sake of one Magpie—that bird of fine feathers and a bright mind, which I had not looked on for a whole year and now hoped to see again.' In the years when Hudson was caged in London he would have given much to be able to see one in Hyde Park—a short mile from his house, but there was none. No sooner does such an ornament to the Park appear in it, than an outcry is raised for him to be shot, the originators and supporters of the idea being not collectors or any of the other principal offenders but self-styled lovers of birds.

If the Chorus of Ironic Spirits could be let loose from Hardy's *Dynasts*, it would delight them to find that the bird protectionists propose to celebrate this crowning triumph of their policy—the appearance of a free wild Magpie in the heart of London—by shooting the bird.

That Magpie is at present still living and at large. It deserves to be more famous than the Jackdaw of Rheims.

Our avi-fauna is for ever proving itself a much more intricate thing than we think it. Precisely at the time when threatening swarms of insects begin to appear each spring, great hosts of insect-eating birds are rushed north to cope with them, disappearing when the danger is over. Twice a year the bulk of our bird population is absolutely changed, like the water in a swimming-bath, yet there is such a close collaboration between the two distinct movements that the actual number of birds in the country probably never fluctuates anything like proportionately to the vastness of the migrations which take place.

From the large broods which certain birds—Titmice for instance—rear each season without showing any very marked increase, we

know that much over half their number must either emigrate permanently or perish each winter, yet of the destruction or loss we see hardly a sign.

The thievish Magpies and blood-thirsty Hawks, which so distress our tender hearts, are just as necessary and integral a part of the whole as Lapwings (which live largely on wire-worms), fish-eating Gulls, or Cuckoos, wholesale destroyers of hairy caterpillars.

There is not at present any Royal Society for the Protection of Flies, nor, so far as I know, of any other insects, but there is no logical reason against one, and, if it should be formed, the Swallows and Robins must in their turn be regarded as murderers.

There are, however, bodies interested in the protection of fish, and they make no secret of their opinion of birds engaged in the same line as themselves.

The root of the whole trouble is that ornithologists have too often latent and unrecognised in their minds a habit of regarding birds as one thing and fish, insects, small mammals and certain plants as another, grouped under the collective title 'Food.' In reality the distinction does not exist. As the correspondent of *The Times* pathetically points out to us, while the Puffin keeps to the rules of the game and feeds on fish, the Great Black-backed Gull plays foul by eating fish and Puffins indiscriminately. It is the same on all sides. We must rid ourselves of the feeling that it is unsporting or cannibal of a bird to feed on other birds—they are just as fair game as fish or mosquitoes are, and it is only our partisan spirit which prevents us from knowing it. It is a truism that life lives on life: and we have far more justification for hanging the promoters of our Waterloo Cup because they let poor hares be remorselessly run down for sport than for shooting Great Black-backs because they kill for food Puffins leaving their burrows.

We have hardly begun, yet, to understand the complicated mechanism of our bird-life. Its fascination has already attracted many ignorant or careless lookers-on, whose zeal outruns their discretion. Before we know and comprehend more of the intricate whole, this sound advice may be given to them:

Let them learn at least to keep their meddlesome fingers out of the machinery until we have found out how it works.

E. M. NICHOLSON.

VERSE TRANSLATION.

BY A. C. BENSON.

MARK PATTISON, in his caustic *Memoirs*, penned an icy sentence about Conington's later life, in which he said that, deserting all serious research, Conington 'abandoned himself to the laziest of all occupations with the classics—that, namely, of translating them into English.' This seems to me an austere and ungracious criticism. Even if a translator does not succeed in unlocking for others the door which leads into the enchanted garden, he gains for himself an insight into the beautiful structure and mood of the original, whatever it may be, which can in no other way be obtained.

And is such work after all so very lazy? It is true that many busy men with scholarly tastes have turned to translation for rest and refreshment. And perhaps the charm of it is that when a man has reached an age at which, however sensitive to artistic beauty he may be, he can hardly hope to originate it, he can at least have the pleasure of closely analysing and exploring the loveliness of some old and beloved strain, and of presenting the emotion and perhaps even the cadence of the original in a more familiar form—of sharing and interpreting beauty, in fact, which is the mainspring of all art.

I shall not here attempt to survey the whole field of verse translation; but I will take one small corner of it, the Greek Anthology, in which I have lately made a number of experiments. The difficulties which a translator encounters in this region are many and various. In the first place, practically one metre alone is used throughout the whole Anthology, the elegiac; and yet the poems themselves are of the most various and contrasted types. Some are little *genre* pictures of daily life, some are descriptions of natural scenery; some deal with grotesque and comic incidents; there are prayers, dedications, epitaphs, tragic adventures, philosophical reflections, romantic experiences. Very many of them are passionate love-lyrics. They cover the whole field of life, and it is impossible to describe the richness and variety of the emotions which they arouse.

Then, too, these subjects are handled with a simplicity and a directness free from complexity and ornament, traced in large and

clear outline, which is far removed from the subtleties of modern presentment. Yet many of them are concerned with the very same impulses, emotions and experiences which befall human beings to-day. In most cases it is only a difference of treatment, not in the least of essential reality.

How then is a translator to attempt to render these effects ? It seems to me that there are only two courses open to him. One way is to render them as exactly and faithfully as possible into melodious and slightly archaic prose—archaic, because such prose admits of more direct statement than the more flexible modern type of prose writing. Such a style as that of the Authorised Version of the Book of Job or the Prayer-book version of the Psalms is well adapted for many of these poems ; on the other hand this vehicle has obvious disadvantages. One of the most delightful characteristics of the Anthology is the astonishing variety of the moods it represents. But if all alike are translated into a monotonous, if stately, prose the translation tends to gain a certain solemnity, or at least a touch of earnestness which is often not the least characteristic of the original. It is essential that a version aiming at any literary distinction should have a distinct life of its own. It is an absolute canon of all such translation that a living original should not be transposed into a lifeless version ; and I am sure that the danger of dignified prose translation is that it is apt to miss the light-heartedness of the original.

What then is the other alternative ? It would be based of course on the principle that what is poetry in the original should be represented by poetry in the translation. One of the essential merits of poetry is that it gains rather than suffers by being under the control of a rhythmical or metrical constraint.

The causes of this perhaps belong to the remoter psychology of art. My point is that if an original poem in another language depends partly for its effect on metrical progression, this must also accompany any attempt to give an equivalent in English. A prose rendering may enable a reader to understand the meaning of the original ; but a prose translation cannot possibly produce the metrical effect of verse upon the reader's mind.

The next step of the problem is considerably more complex. The original poems are, as I have said, almost invariably in the elegiac metre ; but on the other hand they deal with a very wide range of emotions and experiences, and in some cases it is quite clear that the writer, by a preponderance of long or short syllables,

is adapting the movement of his verse to the mood of the poem. Some of the poems have a firm and stately progress, others trip lightly, full of fairy echoes.

It appears to me that the only way in which a translator can approach his task is to read the original poem carefully so as to appreciate its mood and characteristic emotion. If he chose for his vehicle some common English metre, such as the iambic quatrain, of eight and six syllables alternately, he would give his translation a monotony which is quite alien to the original. But if, after mastering the quality of the original, he sets himself to think what kind of treatment a subject so conceived and expressed would be likely to receive at the hands of an English writer, it becomes not a piece of task-work but a matter of delicate choice and discrimination.

Personally I can only say that in the generality of cases it seemed to me clear enough to what kind of English poem the original corresponded, though occasionally I became aware in the course of translation that a metre I had chosen was unsuitable and had to be abandoned. Sometimes the original appeared to me to resemble an Elizabethan lyric, sometimes a free Swinburnian dactylic stanza, or a smoothly gliding Tennysonian trochaic. Sometimes it was like a trim eighteenth-century lyric, the points neatly and sharply made; or a gnomic epigram would resemble in manner the rolling distichs of Pope. The greater number were perhaps best fitted, I thought, by the sober Wordsworthian iambics, in Long or Common Metre; while some, and perhaps the most characteristic—those perfectly lucid, simple and direct statements of essential facts or emotions, which somehow in Greek contrive to be a high and austere poetry—seemed to me to have no counterpart in English literature at all; and these I did not attempt.

I rather carefully abstained from consulting other English versions of the Anthology while I was making my translation, but I was agreeably surprised to find that in many cases my own selection of a metre corresponded with the metres employed by other translators, often enough at all events to make me feel that the correspondence was real and not purely fanciful.

But one of the chief difficulties in the path is this, that the Greek mind tends to conciseness and austerity in poetry while English prefers discursiveness, qualification, and metaphor. And in such cases I found that the only way of approaching it was to

ask oneself 'What, after all, is the central idea of the poem ?' And that, after all, is generally clear enough in the Greek ; and this once ascertained, the question is how the illustrative touches, the points that make up the picture, are to be represented in English. In Greek these are often conveyed by a single epithet, and sometimes indeed are implied rather than expressed. A certain expansion then becomes necessary, which cannot be done by importing new details and images, but rather by emphasising in English every smallest hint in the Greek. The aim is that, as in William Cory's beautiful poem on Comatas,

' Two minds should flow together, the English and the Greek.'

The point is that the Greek mind and the English mind produce the same effects by different methods : and we shall best arrive at a conclusion by examining a few epigrams in closer detail. I will therefore give a few examples of epigrams, by various and noted translators, indicating how far they seem to me to conform to the right standards of translation. The first is by Evenus who flourished about 500 B.C., and the subject is a remonstrance addressed to a swallow for carrying off a cricket from the meadow to feed her brood. The swallow is called 'Attic maiden' because Procne, who was changed into a swallow, was the daughter of Pandion, King of Athens. Evenus blames the bird for carrying off a creature which, like herself, is winged and musical and a summer visitor. It is a particularly difficult epigram to translate into English—indeed it cannot be done literally—because the same epithets are applied to bird and insect, and while this is perfectly clear in Greek, because of the case-inflections, it can only be expressed in English by a clumsy periphrasis. The nearest we can get to such a construction is to say something like 'A musician should not injure a musician,' and even Mr. Mackail for all his skill has not been able to make his translation read like ordinary English. He translates it thus :

' Attic maid, honey-fed, chatterer, snatched thou and bearest the chattering cricket for feast to thy unledged young, thou chatterer the chatterer, thou winged the winged, thou summer guest the summer guest, and wilt not quickly throw it away ? for it is not right nor just that singers should perish by singers' mouths.'

Cowper's translation is both literal and melodious ; not a point is missed, and hardly anything is added, except 'delicious' which

is admissible, and 'gasps,' in the last line, to which it is fair to take exception. 'Unfold the wing' is perhaps a little otiose, and even ambiguous ; but it is a charming English lyric.

' Attic maid, with honey fed,
Bear'st thou to thy callow brood
Yonder locust from the mead,
Destined their delicious food ?

Ye have kindred voices clear,
Ye alike unfold the wing,
Migrate hither, sojourn there,
Both attendant on the Spring.

Ah ! for pity drop the prize ;
Let it not with truth be said
That a songster gasps and dies,
That a songster may be fed.'

Next I will quote an epigram by Leonidas of Tarentum (300 B.C.) one of the most varied and original writers. He exhibits a wonderful crispness and concentration of phrase, and packs many details into a very small compass. The epigram is about a little sea-going skiff, which is supposed to speak, and say that security at sea does not come from size or gear but from a natural piety. Mr. Mackail translates it into clear and limpid English, but the racy sparkle of the original needs some metrical effects to emphasise it.

The translation by Charles Merivale, the historian, Dean of Ely, the friend and contemporary of Tennyson, is admirable in its terseness and simplicity. No points are omitted ; 'oar and mast' take the place of 'rudder.' Perhaps it may be said that the phrase 'straight and fearless on a prosperous voyage' is hardly adequately represented by the words 'cannot live in stormy seas.' But for all that it is a spirited English lyric, and has caught the crisp directness of the original.

' They call me the little one, and say that I cannot go straight and fearless on a prosperous voyage like ships that sail out to sea ; and I deny it not ; I am a little boat, but to the sea all is equal ; fortune, not size, makes the difference. Let others have the advantage in rudders, for some put their confidence in this and some in that, but may my salvation be of God.'

'They say that I am small and frail
 And cannot live on stormy seas ;
 It may be so ; yet every sail
 Makes shipwreck in the swelling breeze.
 Nor strength nor size can then hold fast,
 But Fortune's favour, Heaven's decree :
 Let others trust in oar and mast,
 But may the Gods take care of me.'

The next is a quaint votive inscription at a spring, where a thirsty traveller dedicates his cup. The spring is a much frequented one, and is filled with little votive figures of nymphs thrown there by travellers. But the subject, as it stands, is a trivial one, a mere picture ; and in prose it appears at once fantastic and dull, depending, as it does, wholly on expression. Yet Mr. Pott, using a dainty tripping measure, has made out of it a little *genre* study full both of light and beauty ; and indeed it is on such poems as these, so lightly touched and unsubstantial, the grace of which depends upon the extent to which the words bring the scene before my mind, that I base my plea for poetical renderings or none at all.

'Hail, thou cold stream that leapest down from the cloven rock and ye images of the Nymphs carved by a shepherd's hand ! Hail, ye drinking troughs, and your thousand little dolls, ye Maidens of the Spring that lie drenched in its waters. All hail ! And I Aristocles the wayfarer give you this cup which I dipped in your stream to quench my thirst.'

'The stream leaps down from the cloven rock, and I hail the
 waters clear,
 And the little figures of rustic nymphs that shepherds have
 offered here.
 Good hap, ye maids of the waterways, who are mirrored
 below in the pool !
 All hail to the kindly rock above that harboured the water
 cool !
 For I was a thirsty wayfarer, and sweet was the draught I
 drew ;
 So take my gift—'tis a cup of horn—that I leave by the pool
 for you.'

In the next example I take we have a curious illustration of literary morality. The tomb of Anacreon was a favourite subject for epigrammatists. To our modern taste the figure of this ancient

wine-bibber and determined sensualist, pursuing the pleasures of love and wine up to an advanced age, seems more scandalous than attractive, and altogether singularly like an early Falstaff. But just as Falstaff is made imperishable by his irrepressible humour, so, we must imagine, Anacreon was saved, in the Greek view, by his indomitable enthusiasm and unfailing freshness of pursuit. He was neither melancholy nor repentant. *Omar Khayyám*, who is a somewhat similar figure, is made memorable by his passionate philosophy, which is after all but the philosophy of satiety. But Anacreon knows neither shame nor weariness, and to the Greek mind he stands out as a devout worshipper of life and its fleeting joys. And then he was a poet as well, though many of the poems ascribed to him are purely traditional.

There are several epigrams in the Anthology which commemorate Anacreon. Tom Moore took two of these, one by Antipater of Sidon (*circa* 100 B.C.), and one the author and date of which are alike unknown. He inserted the latter into the text of the former, and it is represented by the third stanza of his paraphrase, and then he made a very free version of the whole. But charming as the lyric is, I think it is a clear case of a translation which departs too far from the original. Most of the images are skilfully preserved, but there is an importation of half-regretful, half-affectionate sentiment, which is not quite consonant with the original because it is both modern and sophisticated.

‘Who gave to love his warmest thought,
Who gave to song his fondest measure,’

are beautiful lines, but bear little relation to the bare simplicity of the Greek, thus rendered by Mr. W. R. Paton.

(1)

‘Let the four-clustered ivy, Anacreon, flourish around thee, and the tender flowers of the purple meadows, and let fountains of white milk bubble up, and sweet-smelling wine gush from the earth, so that thy ashes and bones may have joy, if indeed any delight touches the dead.’

(2)

‘O beloved who didst love the clear lute, O thou who didst sail through thy whole life with song and with love.’

' Around the tomb, O bard divine !
 Where soft thy hallowed brow reposes,
 Long may the deathless ivy twine,
 And summer pour his waste of roses !
 And many a fount shall these distil,
 And many a spring refresh the flowers ;
 And wine shall gush in every rill,
 And every fount yield milky showers.

Thus, shade of him whom nature taught
 To tune his lyre and soul to pleasure,
 Who gave to love his warmest thought,
 Who gave to love his fondest measure ;
 Thus, after death, if spirits feel,
 Thou may'st from odours round thee streaming
 A pulse of past enjoyment steal,
 And live again in blissful dreaming.'

The next epigram I take is one of Meleager's. Meleager was a Syrian who lived in the first century before Christ, and is perhaps the most surprising of all the writers in the Anthology. To begin with, he had an immense poetical range, and his work is marvellously melodious and fine in quality. And then, too, he often anticipates with his passionate genius a far more modern and idealistic conception of love as a sort of mystical worship evoking the deepest and most spiritual influences.

This particular epigram is not one of the deepest or of the lightest that he wrote. It is, however, in the original Greek, a poem of extraordinary sweetness, full of summer air and the scent of flowers. But even in Mr. Mackail's finely-modelled prose the ecstasy evaporates.

Andrew Lang's version succeeds in being a really beautiful lyric ; and such a phrase as ' straying o'er the mountain brow ' is a perfect expansion of ' mountain-wandering,' more literally ' mountain-walking,' because it gives the impression, which a crowded host of flowers gives, of being like the vanguard of an advancing army. Yet the lines—

' The thousand blossoms wax and wane
 On wold and health and fragrant bough,'

are not found in the Greek. The ' sweet rose of Persuasion ' is hardly represented. ' That my love's feet may tread it down ' has

no counterpart in the original ; and altogether it may be said to be a case of a subject taking the bit between its teeth and running away with the translator.

‘ Now the white violet blooms and blooms the moist narcissus and bloom the mountain-wandering lilies ; and now, dear to her lovers Zenophile the sweet rose of Persuasion has burst into bloom. Meadows why idly laugh in the brightness of your tresses ? For my girl is better than garlands sweet to smell.’

‘ Now the bright crocus flames, and now
The slim narcissus takes the rain,
And straying o’er the meadow’s brow
The daffodillies bud again.
The thousand blossoms wax and wane
On wold and heath and fragrant bough,
But fairer than the flowers art thou,—
Than any growth of hill or plain.

Ye gardens, cast your leafy crown
That my love’s feet may tread it down
Like lilies on the lilies set ;
My love whose lips are softer far
Than drowsy poppy-petals are
And sweeter than the violet.’

I take next a charming epigram by Lucilius (A.D. 100) of which both the beauty and the fine antithesis disappears entirely in a literal prose version. The thought is one which can be touched, briefly and delicately, in verse, but which becomes heavy and lumbering in prose ; and I think that Dr. Garnett has exactly caught the pretty balance of the original.

‘ Either put an entire stop to loving, Eros, or else add being loved, so that you may either abolish desire or temper it.’

‘ Eros, I pray thee to remove
Or else divide my pain ;
Either forbid me more to love,
Or make me loved again.’

The next is somewhat similar. It is an epigram by Maecius (First Century, A.D.), and is just the self-upbraiding of an impatient lover, who rebels against the tyranny of his emotions and yet has not the heart to resist them. It is the sort of poem that

is to be found in scores in any collection of Elizabethan lyrics, on the restive surrender of the lover to the passion that enslaves him.

The version by Mr. Pott is admirable ; he has chosen a quick-moving metre full of chiming melody. He takes every point of the original, and I think it exactly embodies both the spirit and the lively movement of the Greek. It is hard to say how it could be better done.

‘ By thy majesty, Cytherea, I swore to keep away for two days from Hedylion, and knowing the complaint of my poor heart, methinks thou didst smile. For I will not endure the second day, and I cast my oath to the winds. I choose to be rather impious to thee for her sake than by keeping my oath to thee to die of piety.’

‘ When by the might of Cypris bright
I vowed to quit my dear,
And from her side afar to bide,
The Goddess laughed to hear.

Well she divined my hapless mind
Would scarce endure a day,
But e'en as now would cast the vow
For winds to bear away.

I'll keep no more the oath I swore
To please the Gods above,
For who would die for piety
When he could live for love ? ’

The last but one I give is one of those severe gnomic epigrams which would be grim enough if it were not made music of. Palladas lived about A.D. 400. It just touches a single idea, the deep sense of the homelessness of life—‘ we brought nothing into the world neither shall we carry anything out ’—and it attempts no sort of consolation, but just faces the facts. Mr. Butler’s version is perfect in its dignity and fidelity.

‘ Naked I came on earth and naked I depart under earth, and why do I vainly labour, seeing the naked end.’

‘ Naked I reached the world at birth,
Naked I pass beneath the earth ;
Why toil I then in vain distress,
Seeing the end is nakedness ? ’

I will give but one more, one of those sepulchral epitaphs which in their bewildered yet restrained sorrow, their hopeless longing for something that seems to have perished utterly like a blown out flame, form the saddest and yet most moving portion of the Anthology.

It is an imagined epitaph by an unknown author on Erinna, a girl-poetess, contemporary with Sappho (Seventh Century, B.C.), but the epigram is certainly of a much later date. Erinna died too young for the full development of her genius to show itself, but she was held to have combined a passionate emotion with a high degree of intellectual vigour. It runs thus in Mr. Paton's prose version :

'Just as thou wast giving birth to the spring of thy honied hymns, and beginning to sing with thy swan-like voice, Fate, mistress of the distaff that spins the thread, bore thee over the wide lake of the dead to Acheron. But the beautiful work, Erinna, of thy verse cries aloud that thou art not dead, but joinest in the dance of the Muses.'

This is an epigram that seems to me, in this concise and accurate version, to lose almost all sense of emotion and poetry, it is so condensed and concentrated.

The version I give is one of my own experiments. It is somewhat freely expanded. But I do not think that there is any importation of images, nor any expansion that is not legitimate in English :

'Twas spring with thee, and borne along
Upon the honied tide of song,
Thou didst delight the opening skies
With wealth of new-born melodies ;
And from thy maiden lips didst fling
Such notes as swans at nightfall sing.
Ah me ! 'twas thus that fate, who shears
The slender thread of mortal years,
Drove thee to seek the realms that brood
In darkness, o'er the sundering flood.
Yet still the songs thou madest then
Find echo in the heart of men ;
Oh, no, thou art not dead ; the Muse
Thy glory and thy grace renews ;
And thou in worship and desire
Art numbered with the heavenly choir.'

I freely admit that this sacrifices the conciseness of the Greek ; but I do not believe that it can be rendered in English without some such free expansion.

The above instances will perhaps serve to show that verse translation, instead of being a fairly simple and straightforward affair, is really a most delicate literary operation. Of course, fidelity to the original must be the first concern of a translator. But what exactly is fidelity ? It is certainly not fidelity to produce translations of beautiful originals, which to an English reader, unacquainted or imperfectly acquainted with the particular language, can only develop a dreary wonder why it was ever worth while to produce such lack-lustre work at all. Moreover, fidelity to the exact words of the original often ends in the use of the detestable jargon which exists in English only for the purpose of translating the classics.

No, the fidelity of the translator must be fidelity to the spirit and essential quality of the original. A word in English may exactly correspond to a word in Greek, though even so the meaning of many words tends to overlap the meaning of the word to which they correspond. But the associations aroused by the words may differ in the two languages. For instance, 'sovereign,' 'monarchical,' 'supreme,' 'absolute,' might all be possible translations of the same word in Greek, but their associations in English differ very much. The artistic translator has to find the word or expression in English which possesses the same sort of associations as the word in Greek ; and it is often difficult to do this except by a process of expansion. Moreover, it is impossible to be certain how the original affected its contemporary readers ; we often do not know whether the associations of particular words were solemn or homely, familiar or surprising, emotional or straightforward. In the larger and more complex poems this is a very serious difficulty. Take for instance Vergil and Homer : it would be absurd to attempt to translate them into the same diction, for though they deal with events of the same date, yet the *Aeneid* is a highly sophisticated literary and romantic epic, while the *Iliad* has some at all events of the simplicity of ballad poetry.

But in the Anthology the case is somewhat different, because the poems there are brief and definite, and in many cases there can be little doubt as to the sort of literary effect at which they are aiming. The task of the translator then is to consider critically and conscientiously what sort of quality he wishes to produce,

and his fidelity will be proved not by the literal exactness of his phrasing but by the extent to which he produces the strength or delicacy, the clear-cut outline or the mysterious suggestiveness, the solemnity or levity of the original. I feel no doubt that this is the general principle on which a translator must base his efforts. But as to the difficulty of the process we have only to look at the two essays on Translating Homer by Matthew Arnold. He lays down in the first with admirable perception and judgment the principles of translation, and distributes liberal and caustic criticisms of the work of two or three unfortunate translators, not by any means unjust, but extremely wounding.

One of these translators made a rejoinder which forced Matthew Arnold to come out into the open. He apologised with majestic urbanity ; but he was tempted to make some experiments of his own in translating Homer into a loose kind of stressed hexameter, based admittedly on Clough's *Bothie*.

The result was both disastrous and ludicrous ; the translations violate all his own canons and many other canons of literary expression. They are so unmetrical that it is almost impossible to scan some of the lines at all. They have an affected simplicity and a feeble sort of garrulity which has neither precision nor beauty nor dignity. If Matthew Arnold with his scholarly sympathies and his stately vocabulary could produce these lamentable travesties, the perils of the translator are indeed grave. Yet it should not deter anyone from trying, if he seriously desires to do so, to present in English dress to English minds some faint reflection of the beauty, the versatility, and the exquisite felicity of the Greek genius.

PRUNELLA CHANGES HER MIND.

I.

MR. WYCKHAM, a bachelor of fifty years, was reading his letters at the table that had supported centuries of Wyckham breakfasts. At one time it seemed likely that a Wyckham in the direct line would always be there to eat toast and marmalade and bacon and eggs on the same oak table. But Mr. Andrew Wyckham had let fifty years go by and had not married, and but for the stable existence of two nephews at Marlborough there might have dawned a disastrous day when no Wyckham came to breakfast at the oak table.

This idea had floated through the mind of Mr. Wyckham's aunt, Mrs. Sartoris, as she poured out his coffee. It had frightened her a little. Andrew was her favourite nephew. He helped her to obtain a rebate on her income tax. He explained patiently, and without exasperation, the current state of her bank account, and he showed a wonderful tact about presents. For instance, if she only showed him this Spring Catalogue and the lovely cloak that attracted her so much, it would be probable that he would say 'You must order it as an Easter present from me, Aunt Constance.' Mrs. Sartoris looked across the table at the squarely built, kindly man who was her host in the old family home. For Mrs. Sartoris, as Constance Wyckham, had eaten her matutinal porridge or bread-and-milk at the oak table. And she, like all the Wyckhams, loved with a deep abiding love the grey Jacobean house set among the poplars and water meadows and downs of Wiltshire. The very thrushes that sang outside the open window were Wyckham thrushes. Their ancestors had gladdened the hearts of her own ancestors. Always with a deep unspoken joy the Wyckhams had looked forth at the terraced garden and the distant trees and the quiet river with its little feathered tenants. With a respect, born of this sense of family pride, Mrs. Sartoris looked at Andrew Wyckham, lord of the Manor of Dinton Parva. He was neither handsome nor young, but she found a sense of confidence and peace in looking at him. Life seemed in some strange way simplified by the stable and cheerful presence of Mr. Wyckham.

'He is so sane, so right-minded,' thought his aunt, and wondered who wrote to him on ruled exercise paper. But having shared breakfast with her husband for thirty years she had learnt a tact that even widowhood had not undermined. She was silent.

Andrew Wyckham's hand as he cut the envelope that contained the exercise paper had shaken. Yet his hand never shook when it held a fishing-rod. Now it trembled so absurdly that he put the letter on his plate. It was written in the rather bad handwriting of modern maidenhood, but it was clear even to Mr. Wyckham's dazzled eyes.

'MY DEAR MR. WYCKHAM,—Do you remember I asked you to marry me nearly a year ago? You said I'd change my mind and I was to wait and see the world. I have seen it a lot at Christmas and I don't like it. I like Dinton Parva much more. I've danced too, and seen lots of men, and I don't like them nearly as much as you. So, please Andy dear, if *you* haven't changed your mind, do marry me. I'd love to be at the Manor House all the summer and you and I could choose bulbs from the Autumn Catalogue. Wouldn't that be fun? If you agree may I come to Dinton Parva for Easter and be married some time soon?

'Always your loving,
'PRUNELLA.

'P.S.—Of course, if you've changed your mind or seen somebody nicer you must tell me. I won't be offended.

'All the same I hope you haven't.'

Mr. Wyckham folded the letter with his absurdly trembling hands, put it into his pocket, and went to the open window. He presented a broad and unsentimental back to his aunt. She could not see his face, that face so luminous and transfigured that his fifty years seemed to have lost half their weight.

His eyes, gazing into the April world, saw a miracle, that miracle still common in this materialistic age, a miracle so heedless of scientists that it undermines even their own reason. For the placid Wiltshire world had turned in a moment into Paradise. The secret was exquisite, elusive. He had seen, while he shaved, the same world, shimmering in its veil of April green. And now it was another world, like, yet imbued with the wonder, the freshness, the transfiguration of a morning in Paradise. His heart seemed riotous under his rather expansive waistcoat. He had, consciously, to order his voice to a sober level, and he twice began to speak.

'Aunt Constance . . . I want to . . .'

A pause.

'There is something I must tell you.'

'Yes, Andy dear.'

'I . . . you wouldn't object to . . . a to visitor at Easter ? You'd . . . you'd act as chaperon for me if necessary ?'

Mrs. Sartoris dropped her catalogue, forgot for a moment that charming marocaine wrap that was £7 19s. 11d. (*sale price*), and that Mr. Wyckham would certainly order if he saw it.

'Of course, Andy,' she said, and wished that a back could be more expressive.

'Who is it, my dear ?'

'It's a girl, Aunt Constance, Prunella Crawford. She's at a Gardening College and she wants to come for Easter. Could you . . . ?'

'Of course ! Mrs. Crawford's daughter ? Andy, I always thought that you'd marry Mrs. Crawford. It surprised me when she married Colonel Menzies last autumn.'

'He suited her much better. Aunt Constance . . . please . . . please prepare for a shock, you'll be very much surprised . . . in fact . . . of course you'll think me an awful old fool. But I believe . . . I believe I'm going to get married after all.'

Very many thoughts flashed through the mind of Mrs. Sartoris. One was that marocaine mantles would cease under the dispensation of Mrs. Andrew Wyckham, but it was drowned in the benign rush of better feelings. Her voice was wholly cordial as she said :

'Dear Andy, I'm delighted.'

She rose and went to him, putting her hands on the resolutely turned shoulders. She might not see his face. But his ears were pink.

'Is it this girl, Andy ?'

'Yes, it's Prunella . . . I know what people will say. Of course I'm a fool . . . at my age. And she's far too good for me. I've waited . . . about nine months . . . and she hasn't changed her mind.'

'Well, of course not.'

'She's only twenty-five, Aunt Constance, half my age.'

'I'm glad she's so sensible then.'

Mrs. Sartoris was no idealist. Mr. George Sartoris, her husband, had by careful training eliminated idealism from the mind of his young bride. To take men as she found them had been the gist of her far-reaching education. But she had an impregnable belief in

her nephew. He had been the prop of his family for the twenty-nine years that had followed his majority. His crippled sister, his widowed mother, had during their lifetime reinforced this belief in Andrew that every female Wyckham felt to be an unassailable creed.

But it seemed to Mrs. Sartoris unlikely that a girl of twenty-five would fully appreciate the sturdy worth of her nephew, and she assumed at once that Prunella wished to wed Dinton Parva and its adequate fortune.

'She's a very lucky woman to get you, Andy,' she said, and patted his shoulder.

'Luck! Oh, Lord! . . . you can't think, Aunt Constance. I know I seem as mad as a March hare . . . I am. Look here, I'm going to wire to her to come here straight. I'll meet her at Salisbury. She'll come down by Bristol. And, . . . and, don't tell anyone yet. She must have a chance of changing her mind when she sees me. I won't have her rushed in any way. It's too good to be true. . . . I don't really believe it. Things like that *don't* happen. Oh! and put her in the Blue room. She will see the river from there and those poplars. I say . . . Aunt Con . . . am I fifty or only twenty-five?'

He turned a radiant face to her, boyish, hilarious with happiness. She clasped him in motherly arms.

'Oh, God!' she prayed, 'let it last. Keep him blind.'

II.

In the church at Dinton Parva the Wyckhams have made it the habit of centuries to be baptized and married and finally blessed with the last office of their Church. Wyckhams in stone kneel there facing their wives, with their progeny kneeling in assorted sexes behind them. Wyckhams in brass commend themselves humbly to your prayers. Wyckhams, rather self assertive in the florid Hanoverian manner, commend their virtues to your attention. Marble angels weep over the urns of Victorian Wyckhams. And a few simple brasses record the deaths of military and naval Wyckhams. It is their church.

Mr. Andrew Wyckham accepted the fact modestly and generously. It cost him a good deal of money and time. Because of it he conquered his shy reserve and read the Lesson every Sunday morning in a quick staccato voice. Because of it he collected the alms of

the congregation and made his way to the vestry after every service to count the collection and to talk to the rector. That any other should usurp this office was impossible.

Mrs. Pitcairn and her elderly husband realised that a large fortune made in rubber and a big house in Dinton Magna did not entitle them to any office in Mr. Wyckham's church. They attended it sometimes on Sunday with as much noise as it is possible to expend on attendance at church. The motor-car made what disturbance a good car can, and the family hustled down the aisle with the impetuous rush of various young and unwilling church-goers and two elderly people who have induced them to enforced attendance.

Mrs. Pitcairn had brought her nephew, Ian Ferguson, with her on this Easter Sunday. He had shown a readiness for church that surprised her in one of her own relations. And now, in the pause for thought during Mr. Wyckham's reading of the First Lesson, she considered the matter. With a merely rectangular turn of her head she could inspect the Wyckhams' pew. There was poor dear old Mrs. Sartoris whose clothes were so often reminiscent of past years! She had a certain distinction, but she was Victorian. Beside her sat a girl who had travelled with Ian from Shrewsbury. She had nearly missed her train and Ian had helped her, and they had found that they were going to the same neighbourhood. Mrs. Pitcairn recalled her nephew's questions about a Miss Crawford who was staying at Dinton Parva. He had said lightly that she was a pretty girl. The rectangular view of Prunella confirmed this opinion. Prunella with downcast eyes was certainly pretty. But she was not *smart*. In Mrs. Pitcairn's sound opinion salvation is only for the *smart*. And the precise interpretation of the word expressed all her code. Still she envied Prunella her right to wear colours like autumn leaves, and she strained her sight to see the long string of cornelian beads round the girl's neck.

Ian Ferguson, the young man who had shown a strange zeal to come to church, also found that the Pitcairns' pew afforded him an oblique view of Prunella. Yet a journey from Shrewsbury shared with the unknown fair had given him hours for the contemplation of the wistful brown eyes that recalled to him the river pools of his native land, and the fond eyes of his faithful retrievers. Perhaps the adventurous quality of the journey had quickened his zeal for further acquaintance. A quixotic part had been thrust upon him. The girl had thrown herself into his carriage at the last

moment. Shyness had vanished in her distress over the luggage that sat imperturbably on the platform as the train went its relentless way. A flushed Prunella with beseeching brown eyes roused him from apathy. He was at once alert, chivalrous, capable. He found the guard. He took matters in hand. He was gravely kind and drew from his companion the story of her hasty drive and the secret of her destination. They were going to the same place. There is a chance that calls itself Providence. It enfolded the two travellers.

'That's providential,' Ian said, 'now I can help you if you have any more difficulties.' But he showed a quiet discretion because there was something of the fawn in Prunella's eyes and something of the dryad in her bearing. Ian was a man who understood animals and he was a very good hunter. He had known how to charm the girl with his stories of Canadian forests, with his travellers' tales. The storyteller's rôle sat well on him, he was a young and pleasant Othello. They had tea together to beguile the journey. They changed trains at Bristol, and had the carriage to themselves during that magical journey from Bristol to Salisbury, when the train, so mercifully slow, wandered graciously by Limpstone and Bradford-on-Avon, Warminster, Wishford, Codford, and the enchanted downs of Wiltshire. The level evening sunlight made fantastically golden the mullioned windows of manor and farm, and turned to green transparencies the leafage of poplar, beech, and chestnut. Illuminated in this golden afternoon world sat Prunella travelling towards her chosen destiny, yet suddenly aware of youth and its demands. To the young man, whom Celtic blood made sensitive to superstition, there seemed something fairy-like about the girl. And to him there was premonition in the accident of their meeting.

He had parted gaily with Prunella on the platform at Salisbury station, so confident was he of other meetings, of a glorious climax to this sudden fairy story that had varied a life of conventional heart affairs.

He had been introduced to Mr. Wyckham. 'A kind old fogey' was his label for the girl's host. Perhaps he was a godfather or guardian or trustee; Ian knew that Prunella had a mother and a stepfather in India.

Now his happy thoughts and that sideways vision distracted his mind from the First Lesson. He had no idea what Mr. Wyckham was reading.

As for that 'kind old fogey,' he closed the Bible with a quick 'Here endeth the First Lesson,' and came down the aisle to his own pew. He was only conscious of Prunella and of himself in this wonderful Easter world that smelt of daffodils and narcissi. A late Easter was symbolic of the late Easter in his heart. The blossoming was the lovelier for its long delay.

As the *Te Deum* rolled through the little church his mind linked his happiness with the past lives of his Wyckham forbears. Some day in the quiet course of things he and Prunella would share a tombstone, their names would be recorded on a brass. 'Prunella, his wife,' 'Also of Prunella his wife,'—the words seemed to chant themselves to his heart. They signified that final exquisite reunion when years and stoutness and few hairs should be forgotten in the gay and gallant glory of eternal youth. Then he sang the *Te Deum* lustily, for he had always been dutiful, and besides his heart sang for the joy he scarcely dared to accept.

He dreaded, being always shy at heart, that loud and cackling conference that takes place at the doors of most country churches on Sunday morning. Mrs. Pitcairn was always the most strident and voluble. She was waiting for Prunella at the west door. Mr. Wyckham had sought sanctuary in the vestry. With a whoop of friendliness she grasped the hand of Mrs. Sartoris, who looked a little bewildered by an onslaught so cordial. Prunella, just behind her hostess, looked straight into the hazel eyes of the young man Ian.

'There's such a funny old tombstone I want to show you,' he said. 'Come down the path here and have a look.'

Prunella followed him obediently.

'Where?' she asked.

'Oh! I don't know. I invented that. I've got to talk to you, haven't I waited out all the service? Look here! Quick! When am I going to meet you? Aunt Flo is asking you to the dance on Thursday. She's talking about it to Mrs. Sartoris now. But I can't wait till Thursday. May I come over this afternoon?'

Prunella, rosy with distress, met his look with her own. A dog tortured by his own obedience looks so at a forbidden joy.

'No, you can't come,' she said, '... don't. I hadn't told you. I must tell you now. I... I'm engaged to Mr. Wyckham.'

Ian stared at her incredulously, then laughed.

'My dear child, tell me another! The old man dreamt it. When did he dare to ask you?'

'He didn't even ask me. I asked him . . . and twice.'

'Why? You don't want money bags at your age?'

'No, no, it wasn't that. We . . . we suit each other. Oh! yes, we do. Youth isn't everything. You see Mother got engaged to Colonel Menzies here and I was lonely and out of it, and I asked Mr. Wyckham to marry me when I saw that he loved me and not mother. I didn't meet anyone I liked more so I wrote to him and asked him again. You see I hadn't met . . . I mean I was quite satisfied.'

Ian laughed again.

'You hadn't met me, and I hadn't met you. We can't help it, it's not our fault. It's just Fate. You'll have to tell the old boy, he'll understand of course.'

'He would. That's just why I can't tell him. I *can't* hurt him like that.'

'He'll expect it. He'll know you're bound to love a younger man. You can't love him, it wouldn't be natural.'

Prunella squeezed her hands distressfully.

'But I *do* love him,' she explained, 'you won't understand. You don't know Andy. His stoutness and his bald head don't make the *real* him old at all. I think he's younger than you are all the time. I do love him, but it's a different feeling, quiet and safe and trustful. I should have been quite happy with him if I hadn't . . .'

' . . . Met me,' Ian concluded.

They looked at each other with eyes that tried to read the veiled mind behind the eyes.

Some way off on the gravel path Mrs. Pitcairn, still voluble, was talking to Mr. Wyckham, who had joined her by the porch.

'Anyway you must come to the dance, even if it's our last time together. I go away next week,' Ian said.

'Oh!'

'Oh! . . . What?'

'Somehow I can't bear it all. I seem to be torn in pieces. I oughtn't to come to the dance and yet I want to.'

'If you don't agree to come I shall call on Mr. Wyckham to-day and tell him the whole story.'

'No, you mustn't. I'll promise. Look, they're waving. We must join them.'

Mrs. Pitcairn met them, full of her news.

'Mr. Wyckham agrees with me that Miss Crawford is to come to my dance. He's promised to bring her over and to fetch her.'

Perhaps he'll come and sit out a dance or two with me. But he is quite firm that you're to come, my dear.'

'Of course you'll go, Prunella. I've promised in your name,' said Mr. Wyckham.

When the motor had gone on its way to Dinton Magna silence fell on the three from the Manor House. They took their way across a field path to the old grey house. Mrs. Sartoris, with rather heavy tactfulness, hastened her footsteps with a remark about letters that she must write before lunch.

'We'll have time to give the dogs a stroll,' said Mr Wyckham, whistling to the two black cockers who lay on the sunny steps.

Prunella slipped her hand into his. He held it kindly and firmly as one holds a child's hand.

At last he spoke.

'Which would you rather have, Prunella, love or trust?' he said.

The girl considered this gravely.

'I think trust is more of a compliment,' she answered, 'but I think most people would rather be loved.'

'Love may last a shorter time,' he suggested. 'Trust is more serviceable.'

'Yes, trust can so easily be broken. One can love for duty's sake, one can't trust for duty's sake. I think on my death-bed I'd like to have been trusted.'

'So too should I,' he said gravely. 'Do you trust me, Prunella?'

'Yes, of course I do. I trust you perfectly, but I love you too.'

One of the dogs turned back to assure himself that the river path was intended. He gave his master just such a glance as Prunella gave him. Mr. Wyckham inspired a quiet faith. But he did not reply to the words or to the glance. His face was a little severe.

'When will our engagement be announced?' the girl asked timidly.

'In your last week here if you still wish it, my dear. Not before then. I think it better not. You must let me decide, Prunella. I'm thinking for you. I've got your ring here in my pocket. It was my mother's engagement ring and her mother's before you. There it is . . . emeralds. But I shall keep it for you.'

'Why must we wait?'

Mr. Wyckham sighed and looked before him towards the tranquil reaches of the river, so silvery on this April day.

'Because miracles don't happen,' he said irrelevantly.

III.

Mr. Wyckham was a little bewildered by the insistent syncopated music of the band and by the rather grotesque movements of the dancers. He was a late Victorian whose ideals of dancing had been founded on Tennyson's 'Maud.' He had expected to find the 'casement jessamine' (though it was not in flower) moving to the rhythm of a waltz. His mother and sister had waltzed to the 'Blue Danube' or to the 'Mabel' waltzes, and he felt perturbed by this strange aggressive music and the rather eccentric attitudes of the dancers. Music that sang of 'coal black mammies' and little piccaninnies had no appeal for his simple British taste.

He was an angler, a lover of quiet streams and willows whitened by the wind, of alder thickets, and shy, high-stepping water-birds. He was the child of solitude, a man of reserve and still, quiet feelings like his river pools. He had come now from the fresh night air and the first bird voices of the morning. At first the glare and noise seemed intolerable, and in his confusion he was really thankful to see Mrs. Pitcairn, magnificent in satin and diamonds, bearing down upon him.

'Ah! dear Mr. Wyckham! You've kept your promise. You must come and sit out a dance with me. Prunella is dancing . . . over there, the dear child, with Ian. She *has* been enjoying herself so much and so has he. I never saw two people so well matched in look and step. Now where shall we go?'

'Somewhere quiet,' said Mr. Wyckham.

'The conservatory, then? You don't mind the scent? I'm so glad to have a chat with you. I so rarely see you. Yes, you're such a dutiful person . . . magistrate and all your committees and then the fishing of course. Here we are . . . my lilies of the valley are lovely, aren't they? Now I do want to talk about your dear little . . . ward, isn't she, Miss Prunella?'

'Very well. You want to tell me something?' he asked gravely. 'Shall I forestall you? You want to tell me that your nephew, Ian Ferguson, is in love with Prunella?'

'Did you know?'

Mrs. Pitcairn was a little abashed by this conclusion to her diplomacy. Tactics are poor things when the enemy quietly pushes them aside and deprives you of your scheme of attack.

'I think I have known it for some time,' he answered. 'I shall ask you later to tell me all you know of your nephew.'

and his affairs. Has he definitely proposed to Pru . . . to Miss Crawford ?

'I think so. But you see . . . you see, Prunella tells Ian that there is a previous engagement to you, and the dear child won't hear of telling you. She's so considerate. Ian has told me . . . of course in strict confidence. And knowing how reasonable you are . . .'

Mr. Wyckham interrupted her in a hard, abrupt voice.

'Don't let us discuss that absurd affair,' he said quickly. 'We had a friendship that might otherwise have led to an engagement, but this . . . this attachment is no surprise to me. Prunella is entirely free. You must tell your nephew so.'

'Dear Mr. Wyckham. You are so sensible. I told Ian that. I said "One can always depend on Mr. Wyckham."'

Andrew Wyckham remained unmoved by the compliment. He was lost in thought. He spoke at last, but with an effort and rather harshly as a man with a cold will speak, or as a man spent with fatigue.

'I thought,' he said, 'of going away . . . perhaps to Switzerland. It would be convenient to me to go soon. Would you . . . would you have Prunella here ?'

'Of course. It would be the very thing. How wise of you. I'd suggest that the engagement shouldn't be announced at once. Let the dear child go back to her College for a term.'

'Whatever she likes,' said Mr. Wyckham wearily. 'And if she's ready to come home now will you find her for me ? Tell her that I'll be with the car.'

Mr. Wyckham crossed the ballroom heavily. He was like a man deafened and blinded by some mischance. His feet dragged a little with the old age that is of the spirit.

In the grey dawn of the April morning Prunella appeared, wraith-like, in her white cloak. She was alone. Mr. Wyckham glanced at her once then looked away.

'Get in,' he ordered in an uninflectioned voice. 'You'll be tired. You can sleep if you sit behind me.'

Prunella tried to speak and failed. She obeyed him silently. The car started and ran its smooth way among the beeches of the avenue. A primrose dawn rose upon the myriad primroses of the woods and hedges. A world rare and exquisite it was, the world of rabbits and tits and finches, alien to their human woes, dewily aloof to the misery in Prunella's eyes and the grim distress in

Mr. Wyckham's. At the door of the Manor he helped her to leave the car.

'You must go to bed,' he said gently, 'and stay there all the morning. They'll bring you breakfast in bed.'

He fumbled with the latch-key. Raising himself he saw that large tears were rolling down the girl's cheeks. She went before him into the shadowed hall. Following her to the foot of the wide stairs he laid his hands upon her shoulders.

'You mustn't mind, my dear,' he said. 'It's not your fault, it's not. It's mine. I was an old fool ever to hope it.'

Prunella turned and with her arms about his neck pressed her tear-wet face to his.

'Oh! Andy, I'm torn in two,' she sobbed, 'and I *do* love you, I do.'

'I know you do . . . in a way,' he admitted.

He held her close for a moment, then firmly he pushed her from him.

'Miracles don't happen,' he said. 'Go now and sleep, poor child.'

Prunella ascended the stairs, she turned to wave to him at the first flight. So fast flowed her tears that she slept the sleep of complete exhaustion and was only awakened at ten o'clock by the brisk movements of a maid-servant with a tray.

'Your breakfast, miss,' said the maid. 'The master said you wasn't to be called till ten o'clock. He's sent you this note, miss.'

Prunella, bewildered by sleep and half-forgotten tragedy, sat up in bed, her dark plaits falling forward. The kindly woman bustled round her, talking cheerfully.

'Why! miss, here's your pretty dress, all crumpled on the floor. You was that tired last night you never hung it up. I don't wonder. You'd think the master would be tired, but he's gone off in a great hurry. Jenkins has just driven him off to catch the London train. He must have had a call sudden like, for he never mentioned going, but he was packed all ready this morning. I don't think he was ever in bed at all by the look of it. He may have got news last night.'

Prunella was thankful for solitude. She turned unheeding from her breakfast to read Andrew Wyckham's letter.

'MY DEAR PRUNELLA,—You're not to blame yourself. It wasn't one bit your fault. In fact I've got to thank you for the days of happiness you've given me. For an old buffer like me even

to see happiness a great way off is a gain. I've had my day now—like the proverbial dog. I knew it couldn't last. Dreams *don't* come true at my age. You must consult your mother and stepfather before you become formally engaged to Ian. I think he will suit you. But I'm not certain. I've some queer instinctive hesitation. Your stepfather must be responsible. I shouldn't be a fair judge. All I wish you you can never know. Don't think of me as unhappy. I'm going to Grindelwald. In the quiet, among the mountains I shall get myself in hand and laugh yet at my foolish elderly self. I was like poor old Hassan in Flecker's play : I thought I could be young and beloved still.

' You must go to Mrs. Pitcairn and be happy. Of all things be happy. There is nothing like happiness. Hang on to it with all your might, Prunella, for it has wings.

' Good-bye, my dear. God bless you.

' Always I am your humble servant.

' ANDREW WYCKHAM.'

Prunella wept and her egg and bacon grew congealed in the cool morning air.

IV.

Prunella could not sleep. Fierce, strange excitements swept over her soul all day. She rocked to and fro on a stormy sea of passion. A restlessness that she had never known possessed her. There seemed a civil war in her own mind. Reason gave the cold shoulder to passion. Mind looked askance at heart. Her spirit was devastated and she could not sleep.

She gazed with hot, tired eyes into the darkness. Ian had been out all the evening at a birthday dinner in the bachelor household of one of the Pitcairns' friends. Duncan and Roy Pitcairn had gone with him. Prunella had missed Ian as one misses a drug, fiercely, restlessly. She confessed to herself that the household at Dinton Magna both exhausted and excited her. Its eager, questing life was so different from the happy, gentle ways of Dinton Parva.

Prunella admitted to herself that a fortnight with Mrs. Pitcairn had filled her with an almost terrified dislike of that voluble and eager lady. The girl had found her thoughts in accordance with the old-fashioned simple thoughts of the Wyckhams. But here in this maelstrom of modernity she was a helpless little fish. Mrs. Pitcairn was an insurgent of the Capitol of social success. Her senses of values, her spiritual exchange, were regulated by those

large weekly illustrated papers that tell us what the great world does on the stage, in society, and on the Continent. She was a woman of aggressive personality, and she caught Prunella in an octopus grip. She wished to dress her, to mould her, to make her such a wife for Ian as seemed suitable to Pitcairn philosophy.

There was no refuge for the girl's shrinking, dryad-like spirit but with her lover. Ian had a tract of character, country-loving, adventurous, child-like, where Prunella was at home. But there were other tracts that left her bewildered and afraid. She tried to forget her fears in his arms, with the fervour of his kisses on her hair and her mouth. But even there Reason, with its cold voice, spoke aloud, like a heckler at eager political meetings.

'If passion fades, what then?' asked Reason. 'He is impatient, scornful of others. Is it likely that you'll escape—always? When middle age comes what will you have left? His standard is not Mr. Wyckham's standard. His chivalry is the chivalry of an adoring lover to a pretty girl. Is it the simple Christian chivalry you saw every day at Dinton Parva?'

At night Reason would sit on Prunella's bed and say these things to her unabashed. And she would answer fiercely, 'But I love him. What is love for but to forgive and forget?' So, reinforcing herself with maternal devotion, she would cast a mantle about the obvious faults of her lover.

Her chief friend in the household was Duncan Pitcairn, who suffered from what his mother called 'odd fancies.' Duncan, having lost a leg in the war, and having been gassed severely, was considered barely responsible for those strange ideas, which, his mother asserted, attack all soldiers. He had acquired a new and inconvenient compassion, a rather tiresome conscience, and a tedious sympathy with other people's ideas. He seemed to understand Prunella as nobody else did. Now in her sleeplessness she thought of him and wished she might talk to him.

She had no book with her and she longed for the cool distraction of some dispassionate book. She remembered that she had seen 'The Solitary Summer' in the library book shelves. She scrambled out of bed, put on her blue dressing-gown and, bare-footed, candle in hand, went downstairs to fetch it. She put the candle on the table and began her search.

Then the hall door opened and a sound of voices disturbed the deathly quiet. One voice talked hilariously and brokenly with gaps of laughter, and two expostulated in noisy whispers.

'Shut up old fellow, come to bed!'

'Ian—you ass, you'll wake them. There's a light in the library . . . hush! it must be the pater.'

Then Ian's voice rose gaily.

'Good old fellow, he'll not say I'm drunk . . . honour of . . . honour of a gentleman . . . I'm not, old hypocrite, Duncan!'

Prunella, listening with a gaze wide in horror, saw suddenly her lover appear at the door. His eyes were bright and foolish, his hair fell limply on his forehead. He looked dishevelled, dissolute, as she had never seen him. He saw her and tried to pull himself to an awkward dignity.

'Prunella! . . . ought . . . to . . . be . . . in . . . bed . . . m'dear!' he said gravely. 'I'm not drunk . . . don't you believe 'em. *You* know.'

He came towards her and she stood still, her eyes fixed on his. Then he stumbled and nearly fell towards her. She steadied him with strong hands.

'Ian, you must go to bed, dear,' she told him gently. 'You must go. Don't make a noise. Duncan will help you, or Roy. We can talk in the morning.'

'Are you angry?' he asked looking at her with a strange bemused expression.

'No . . . not angry. Only go to bed.'

Roy, his arm in his cousin's, dragged him out of the room. Duncan hesitated at the library door, then closing it he came back to Prunella.

'I say! It's the devil's luck you should have seen him!' he declared. 'You need never have known. Though I think you *ought* to know. He's been far better lately. It's only now and then anyway. I say, you won't cut up rough, Prunella?'

The girl, Madonna-like in her straight blue dressing-gown and loose dark hair, looked at him gravely.

'No, I'm not blaming him,' she said. 'I'm only so awfully sorry for him.'

'You won't be too down on him to-morrow,' Duncan pleaded. 'It doesn't do with a man.'

'I know. I think . . . I think he needs a stronger woman. You see I get frightened.'

'What! of his drinking?'

'Not entirely. Just now he seemed to be somebody else. That terrifies me. I can't explain it. If one loves a person and they

turn into somebody else . . . a stranger, with strange eyes and a different voice. It seemed like . . . a nightmare that terrified me long ago, almost before I was born.'

Duncan tried to understand. He looked a mute sympathy.

'I say—you're shivering!' he exclaimed. 'Come along up. It'll all be quite different when you've had a sleep.'

Prunella nodded. Her teeth were chattering as she went upstairs. She had forgotten her book and the candlestick shook in her hand.

V.

Mr. Wyckham was like those conscientious invalids who take their medicine, their exercise, and their rest with touching regularity and still remain uncured. He had gone to Grindelwald because he thought that among the mountains and the pinewoods he would find becoming sanity and sufficient humour to laugh at his own folly.

Each morning at his open window he said 'I am better,' and each night to the black and star-sewn sky he confessed 'I seem worse than ever.'

He had summoned his widowed aunt to share the comfort of the big hotel. He was meticulous in his care for her comfort. He sought vainly to persuade her by his constant flow of small talk that he was a cheerful middle-aged philosopher rapidly shuffling off a trifling disappointment.

But there were times when he needed solitude as the bush-ranger needs water. There were times when the chatter of the hotel was intolerable beyond bearing.

On this May day he had known that he must go apart and nurse his wound as a sick animal does. He took his lunch with him to please Mrs. Sartoris, and set off on the ascent to the Faulhorn.

Fifty years had made him a little stout and the long climb taxed his lungs; but he welcomed physical discomfort, it seemed at least a distraction from the dull ache of his spirit.

He wondered, sated by the exquisite fullness of spring on a Swiss mountain, if he would not have been wiser to take his grief to Bethnal Green or Whitechapel. The sordid streets would not have mocked him, the poor and dirty and hungry would have been more akin to his stricken soul than the flowering cherries, the quince bloom, the patches of pink polygonum, the jewel-like

gentians and primulas, the golden-hearted kingcups and globe flowers. In all the lavish beauty and fulfilment of Nature there was no comfort for him, only mockery. Every bird and flower rejoiced in its own beauty and youth. Each found its little span of life complete in love and happiness and fruition. He, alone, walked amidst the loveliness, middle-aged, unbeautiful, unnecessary to anyone; half a century old yet ignorant of the happy cares, the ecstasies, the peaceful preoccupations of the birds among the quince trees and the squirrels in the wood. The beauty mocked him. If Mrs. Sartoris had not been so happy he would have packed his bag and gone back to London.

Still he climbed. Exertion had a sort of grim comfort. But all the time Reason and Instinct kept up their unending argument in his brain.

'If,' said Reason, 'you love her, you must be truly glad to have set her free for happiness.'

'I've done it,' retorted Instinct, 'but I shall go mourning all my days.'

'Surely virtue is its own reward and a clear conscience is a good companion,' said Reason.

'Bunkum!' exclaimed Instinct. 'I'd rather be happy for three days even if I burnt in hell for three centuries.'

'But happiness doesn't come that way,' Reason declared.

'I know, I know,' said Instinct, 'but there's no comfort anywhere, so leave me alone.'

In the pinewood Mr. Wyckham collapsed with fatigue. He sat down on a mossy rock with his head on his hands.

The pinewood was cruel too. It talked of Prunella more insistently than the birds and the cherry trees had done. The sunny resin-scented air, the soldier-like trunks, the fairy-tale atmosphere, the expectancy of gnomes and tree spirits insisted on the presence of Prunella, who was always in his thoughts, however persistently he tried to banish her.

Head on hands he rested in the sunshine. Spring is very cruel to the broken-hearted, to the old of spirit and the hopeless.

'I'll fight it out before I go down,' said Andrew Wyckham. 'I'll stand up to it.'

He tried to find help in the snowy aloofness of the Wetterhorn. But the Wetterhorn said 'I am too old, too cold, too passionless to care for your little loves and little lives. What are they to my aeons?'

Then Mr. Wyckham looked down the hillside, into the tender green mist of spring where a girl was toiling upwards. He was angry with her because she was invading his solitude and because she looked absurdly like Prunella. The likeness mocked him.

He shut his eyes for a time and looked again. The girl was waving, and that was brazen impudence in a strange girl. Very deliberately he lit his pipe and wondered if his brain had grown fantastic with much brooding, for he had never seen anyone so like Prunella. And she waved and called to him.

'Miracles don't happen,' said Mr. Wyckham. 'This is an illusion.'

He would not move and the girl who was like Prunella came close to him and threw herself on the moss and hepatica leaves at his feet.

'Oh! Andy,' she gasped, 'why don't you look at me or speak to me?'

'Because, Prunella, you're not real. I'm only dreaming . . . and I've been hurt enough.'

Prunella raised herself to her knees and flung herself against his waistcoat. Her attitude expressed an abandonment of fatigue and grief.

'Will you send me away?' she sobbed.

'My dear! Draw your breath . . . try and explain. I'm too bewildered. Are you a ghost? No . . . you're so hot and panting. How did you get here?'

'By that morning train. I saw Mrs. Sartoris . . . I came straight up to look for you . . . and I'm so tired I want to lie down here and die. Oh! Andy, I wish I could die here in your arms and be buried in the pinewood. I've behaved so awfully badly to you all. I know I have. I wish someone would shoot me as I deserve.'

'Still I don't understand. Why aren't you with the Pitcairns?'

'Because I was frightened. Ian got drunk. Mind you I don't blame him a bit. I'm only sorry. But he frightened me. And one can't help a man who frightens one. He must marry a woman who can help him to keep steady. Besides I came to understand things better. Only half of me loved him, the other half always loved you all the time. I know you can't want me now, but I had to come. I just ran away that morning and came to you as fast as ever I could come.'

'You ran away?'

'Yes, I stayed up all night and packed. I took a suit-case and went to the stable and found a groom to drive me to the station.'

I said I had a sudden call. I left a letter for Duncan. He'll explain, he understands, and I wrote to Ian from London. I'm ever so sorry for Ian, but he'll be glad some day. Now you can do what you like about me. I'll be quite obedient.'

Mr. Wyckham looked down into the brown, trustful, dog-like eyes raised to his. The girl's hands were clinging to his coat. Her trust in him almost terrified him. He knew that few indeed are the men so trusted.

'Oh ! good heavens ! I can't decide for you any more, Prunella,' he said almost roughly. 'What do you want to do ?'

'I want you to marry me . . . in Switzerland, and as soon as possible. It's the third time I've asked you, Andy, and, of course, I don't expect you'll want me now.'

Andrew Wyckham stood up and pulled his companion to her feet.

'Look here,' he said, 'I'm not a saint or an angel or a stone or a namby-pamby old gentleman in a book . . . I'm a man, though you don't seem to know it. If you say that again I shall marry you, and if you play fast and loose again . . . I'll strangle you, Prunella.'

Prunella watched him with dilated eyes. 'Will you please marry me, Andy ?' she repeated.

'I will,' he answered.

The level evening sunlight made a glory of the Wetterhorn glaciers as they came down the hillside.

'Have you realised my age ?' asked Mr. Wyckham as he looked at the frail, nearly-blown blossoms of the cherry trees. Prunella squeezed his hand.

'I don't think there is any age,' she said, 'not for immortal spirits. Look at the Wetterhorn ! I suppose it's millions of years old and yet it's not old at all. It's shining and mighty and eternally beautiful. I don't think people need get old ever, not when they love and are loved, as you and I will love each other.'

She turned towards the mountain, the wind blowing her hair from her face.

'Though I'm young and silly and tiresome and very badly behaved,' she told him, 'I'm not afraid . . . not of age, nor of anything.'

'Nor am I,' said Mr. Wyckham, 'for miracles *do* happen.'

W. M. LETTS.

MEDIAEVAL FISH.

BY L. F. SALZMAN, F.S.A.

'Of all nacyons and countres, England is beste servyd of Fyssh, not only of al manner of see-fyssh, but also of fresshe-water fyssh, and of al manner of sortes of salte-fyssh.' There was therefore a certain propriety and national significance in the banquet given by Henry V in honour of his marriage with gentle Kate of France, for 'ye shall understande that this feest was all of fyssh.' Some idea of the Lenten resources of mediaeval England can be gathered from the menu of the three courses, each consisting of a dozen or more dishes, which constituted that memorable banquet. All kinds of fish were represented, from fried minnows to 'fresshe sturgeon with welkes,' and in particular a host of the lesser and now despised fresh-water fish, including roach, perch, gudgeon, chub (about as appetising as an old pair of boots and probably less sustaining), and tench ('of a most unclean and damnable nourishment'). Salmon and 'trought' each make a single appearance, but the only fish that occurs in all three courses is the regicide lamprey. Undeterred by the fate of Henry I, monarchs and nobles continued to patronise the luscious lamprey. Henry III, in one of his curiously intimate official notes, orders supplies of this delicacy to be sent up to Westminster, 'because to the king and queen all other fish seem insipid beside lampreys.' However devoted they were to lampreys after their death, our kings do not seem to have considered them lovely and pleasant in their lives, and even Henry III, with his genius for selecting undesirable favourites, did not follow the example of the Roman orator, Hortensius, who made a pet of a lamprey and wept over its death, or of Antonia, wife of Drusus, who bedecked one of her lampreys with jewels, including earrings, doubtfully appropriate to a fish traditionally connected by marriage, if not by blood, with the 'deaf adder who stoppeth her ears.' Unattractive, as most would consider, when alive, the lamprey when cooked must have excelled even the conger, of which one ancient enthusiast declared that the savour was so divine that it would make a dead man sniff.

In the matter of cooking fish the Scots, in the sixteenth century, held the highest reputation, and it is possible that they were

among the rare cooks who could even make a savoury pie out of the dry, unappetising stockfish, which the Icelanders, 'beastly creatures, unmanered and untaughte,' used to eat raw. Nor was this skill of the Scots to be despised in days when fasting was universal and fishing was the pursuit of food and not a form of sport. For the average gentleman of the Middle Ages would have agreed with Plutarch in regarding fishing as 'a filthy, base, illiberal employment, having neither wit nor perspicacity in it.' Occasionally a great man would attend the dragging or netting of his stews ; for instance, the Abbot of Fountains had a lake where he sometimes fished in person, on which occasions a horn would be blown to summon the neighbouring tenants to assist, in return for which they received half the catch ; but the growth of angling as a form of sport was slow. An exceptionally early reference in the Willoughby household accounts of 1521 to 8d paid 'for ownntment to take fyche' seems to anticipate the 'alluring ointments' of the later seventeenth century, concocted of cat's fat, powdered mummy, oil from a dead man's skull, and similar abominations, but it was not until the time of the Stuarts that men began to feel, with the Silesian nobleman, that it was as good to hunt carp as hares and abandoned the net for the rod and line. Incidentally the common belief that carps, hops, and the Reformation came into England together appears questionable, as carp appears in English cookery books of earlier date and 'carpe deore,' which suggests goldfish, was served at the banquet of Henry V.

If the carp is the wiliest of pond fish, surely the mullet, for which Arundel early attained a great celebrity, must be the most foolish of sea-fish, for 'the mullets have a naturall ridiculous qualitie by themselves to be laughed at ; for when they be afraid to be caught they hide their heads, and then they thinke they bee sure ynoch, weening that their bodies is likewise hidden.' A certain fortunate foolishness was also noticeable in the shark, whose attention was easily attracted away from his prey, so that if a sailor fell overboard and was attacked by a shark, his mates would throw over a dummy figure of straw in a white garment, presumably kept handy for this express purpose, and the shark would at once turn to this and leave the man free to escape. That all fish were not foolish, however, is easily seen from the cunning displayed by the 'sea-frog' in obtaining a meal. 'It puddereth in the mud and troubleth the water that it might not be seene ; and when the little seely fishes come skipping about her, then she puts

out her little horns or barbels which she hath bearing forth under her eies, and by little and little tilleth and tolleth them so neere that she can easily seaze upon them.' Wisdom and beauty do not always go together and this sea-frog is an ugly devil, uglier even than the flounder, whose side-drawn mouth perpetuates the sneer with which he received the election of the herring as king of fishes.

Making allowance for the silvery beauty of a shoal of herring and for the excellence of 'baken herynge dressid and digit with white sugure' or of the pies that Norwich sent yearly to the King, made of herrings, dressed with ginger, cloves, cinnamon, galingale and other spices, most people would still be inclined to confer the title of royalty upon the salmon. What occult connexion there can be between that lordly fish and the pig, I cannot say, but I believe it is still considered unlucky for a salmon fisher to mention pigs, and in a Scottish Statute of the twelfth century a free passage, without nets or traps, had to be left in midstream of a salmon river so wide that a three-year old sow, well-fed, could not touch both sides at once, while a century later the passage in the Derwent was to be wide enough for a sow and her five little ones to pass through. In case of disputes the difficulty of applying such a legal standard to the measurement of the stream must have been extraordinary, as anyone who has attempted to get five little pigs into line on land will admit. The idea of these river pigs naturally suggests the sea-swine, porpoise or porkpisce, which 'hath his name from the hog hee resembles in convexity and curvyte of his backe, from the head to the tayle.' Oddly enough the porpoise, 'nother prayzed in the olde testament nor in physycke,' was regarded by our ancestors as excellent eating, its tongue being apparently considered as an especial dainty, as Henry I, when he granted the Bishop of London the right to all 'craspeis' taken on his estates, carefully added, 'except the tongue, which I have reserved to myself.' This, being, like the sturgeon and the whale, a royal fish, was usually claimed by the Crown, and in the sixteenth century a complaint was made from Devon that while there was 'yerely grete resorte of the fysche called Porpes, whereof yf any by chance happyn to be takyn the officers of the Admiraltie compell the pore men fyschers of the same to pay and delyvere them of every of the said fysche the tone half,' so that now no one would trouble to catch them. For the purposes of mediaeval unnatural history the porpoise was identified with the dolphin, that

most musical or rather music-loving, of fish, which 'hath no voyce but singeth like a man' and also resembles many men of the type who cannot but do sing, in that 'it slepeth very hartely, that thei be heard ronke (snore) a farre off.' The musical ability of the porpoise was conspicuously displayed at the choral festival held 'when Mydsomer evyn fell on Palmes Soundey,' for then :

'The samon sang the hie Mass, the heryng was his clerk,
On the organs playde the porpas, ther was a mery werke.'

If its appearance as a performer was exceptional, it was an excellent listener, for though it has 'none eares for to here, nor no nose for to smelle, yet it smellethe very welle and sharpe, and they here gladly playnge on instruments, as lutes, harpes, tabours and pypes.' A similar taste on the part of the whale was used for its capture, "When the maryners spie where he is, then thei accompanye them a gret many of shypes togeder about him with divers instrumentis of musike, and they playe with grete armonye" (being apparently more handy with the harp than Kipling's jolly mariners) 'and the fische is very glad of this armonye and cometh fletynge above the waters to here the melody; then they have among them an instrument of yron, the whiche they fasten into the harde skinne and the weght of it synketh downwards into the fat and grese, and sodenly with that all the instruments of musik be styll.' While this may have been the procedure of the regular whalers, the mediaeval sailor was not above dispensing with the orchestra and improvising a harpoon, and in 1280 the tenants of the Countess of Arundel are recorded to have pursued a whale off the coast of Norfolk, 'with their anchors fixed in it.' It was off the same coast in 1255 that a 'great monstrous fish,' probably a sperm whale, was captured after a struggle in which six boats were sunk. Whale steak is a delicacy of which one still reads in records of Arctic exploration, but it was formerly a common and much appreciated dish in England; there are frequent orders for a whale to be sent up from the coast to the royal larder or for '100 pieces of best whale' for the King's table, while at the end of the thirteenth century, whale 'of this year's salting' fetched 2d. a pound, and 'superannuated' whale (a most unattractive item for a fish dinner) cost half that price. Seal was another of the 'deynteithes full dere' of past generations, but most of us would probably be content to ignore the meaty part of the seal, while appreciating his skin and deprecating his marital habits, for he

'fighteth ever with his wyfe tyll she be dede and when he hath kylled her seketh another and liveth with her very well tyl he dye.' Which seems to be an argument in favour of second marriages.

When the seal set so bad an example of behaviour it is not surprising that the little fishes of the sea should occasionally have been lacking in refinement. The plaice, for instance, 'is a fisshe that is in sandy grounde, and when he is moved or stered he wynketh,' just as Alice's 'eldest oyster winked his eye and shook his heavy head.' Still more vulgar was the behaviour of the murex, that species of whelk from which the Tyrian purple dye was obtained and which was therefore called the purple: 'When a cockle gapes the purples make at them with their pointed tongue, which they thrust out to annoy them.' No wonder that Browning asked: 'Who brought the murex up?' Of course, to some extent, the cockles may be said to have provoked the purples by gaping, and they were fortunate to escape with insult and avoid the injury which befell the equally unmannerly oyster, of which it is said that 'when the oyster gapeth the crab throweth lytell stones in him and so getteth his fishe out, for it bydeth then open.' Talking of crabs reminds one that, contrary to what might be expected, the lobster is subject to nerves and can be frightened to death, for while, 'lobsters are readie to scratch and teare the congre; the congres againe doe as much for the polype; yet, the lobster is so afraid of the polype or pourcuttell that if he spie him neere he evermore dieth for very woe.' In this case the antipathy was no doubt justifiable as a large octopus or cuttlefish might be more than a match for a lobster, but why on earth should a wolf be afraid of a shrimp? Yet it was.

FIFTY YEARS OF SHAKESPEARE ON THE STAGE.

BY THE DEAN OF WINCHESTER.

I. THE COMEDIES.

It may be worth while—for I know there are very many people as much interested in 'The Shakespearean stage' as I am—for an old person, before the time comes when he will be no longer able to register his impressions, to set down what he can remember of how Shakespeare has been acted in England during the last half-century. It was on December 17, 1874, that I first saw a play of Shakespeare on the stage, and the memory of it is quite vivid still. It is one of the great events of my life. I think I had already read all Shakespeare's plays and enjoyed them, after a fashion, as much as I do now. One can never recapture the joy of a first reading. I often think that if I were offered, as one is in fairy stories, my choice of one pleasure out of the purse of Fortunatus, I should choose the discovery of a new and genuine play of Shakespeare: one that I had not read, and, to double the delight, one that I should immediately see acted. For I think it idle to pretend that there is any real doubt as to who is right in the controversy about the merits of the stage and the study. Let commentators do their best—and very good that is: only they often do their worst and that is soul-destroying—yet still there is something lacking. Harry Irving was quite right in the excellent lecture on *Hamlet* which he gave in Australia. Below all the splendour of the poet, the humour of the observer of life, is the basic fact that Shakespeare was an actor and wrote for the stage. I am sure he would have been as much amused by the unending dissections of his literary admirers as Robert Browning is, in Max Beerbohm's caricature, by the pertinacities of the Browning Society. But I do not think he would ever weary of seeing his plays on the stage. And that is why I am confident that I never should.

Not that I venture to disparage either the critics or the commentators. I may giggle at Gervinus, but I bless Mr. A. C. Bradley. I am almost convinced when I read *Pericles* that there is more of Wilkins in it than Shakespeare: I am almost certain that a

great part of *Henry VIII* is Fletcher's: I am nearly sure that Mr. J. M. Robertson is right about *Titus Andronicus*; but never quite. Just think how incomparably superior are the unmentionable people in *Pericles* to (say) Spungius and Hercius in *The Virgin Martyr*, without in any degree losing, when they are acted, the effect one feels of repulsion at shameful vice. And only go and see *Titus Andronicus* at the Old Vic, and Aaron at least will make you feel that there is a master hand in it which you never quite feel when you read *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Almost you may be persuaded to place Marlowe near Shakespeare if you see, as I have seen, Mr. William Poel and his fellows act *Edward II*. Almost, but again I say not quite. I do believe that the stage is the touchstone. I know Coleridge says that one may have ears 'but so has another animal'; but the eyes do come in most powerfully to help. In fact, one wants all one's senses to enjoy, and perhaps to recognise, a play of Shakespeare. And that is why I will make my record before my senses fail me one by one. And I have seen every play of Shakespeare—I mean of those in the 'Globe' edition which has been my treasure since the two Maclagans, my schoolfellows, gave it to me at Christmas 1872—every play acted except the *Third Part of Henry VI*. Though it does not seem very likely, I may still see that before the fifty years are fulfilled; but I can hardly expect a manager to stage it in order to make my tale complete. Anyhow I will not wait.

Let me begin with that December day when I went to the Crystal Palace with my mother. She did not care very much for the theatre herself, I think, but her mother (who died before I was born) was a devoted playgoer; I suppose I inherit the taste from her. Anyhow here was a chance not to be missed: I begged off from the inspection of dusty stuffed animals, illuminative reproductions of mediaeval and Renaissance sculpture (from which I afterwards learnt much), from the stodgy veal-and-ham pie, and the pudding which tasted of hair oil, and even from the thrill of a game with the automaton chess player (about whom I had read, sometime before, I think, in the memories of Robert Houdin), to go and see *As You Like It* by myself. In those days country boys were not often allowed about alone, and it was with a certain tremor that I sat tight in my seat till the play was over, missing the train I was expected to return by, and came back a good while later to our lodging in London. For the play took a long time to act, and I could not possibly tear myself away till

Madge Robertson had told us in the Epilogue that good wine needs no bush, and that she would kiss as many of us as had beards that pleased her. Indeed after all these years I cannot think of any acting throughout a whole play that was better than the acting I saw that day. Those were the times when actors of eminence often went down to the Crystal Palace for an afternoon and enjoyed themselves, I fancy, as much as we did, by shaking off the parts they were acting during a long run of some modern comedy or melodrama in London and showing that they could act Shakespeare with zest and reverence. I have seen other Rosalinds, and the dreadful thing is that I have forgotten some of them; though I do remember that Marie Litton was full of spirit; but I can't forget Mrs. Kendal or think it possible that she was surpassed by anyone in my lifetime. She had that perfect union of ladylikeness—I don't know what word there is: I do not mean gentility—with an immense sense of fun which ladies who are 'real ladies' so often have. I do think there was a touch of theatricality here and there: I am not sure that I know any professional actress who has entirely avoided that; but I am certain that the whole of her dialogue went trippingly off her tongue as if it came straight from her quick brain and her loving heart. I think all her scenes with Orlando were especially charming: I remember the little wriggles of shyness when she felt how ill-suited she was in doublet and hose, and the courageous impudence of her voice when she coached poor Orlando in love-making. And the Orlando of course was Madge Robertson's husband: such a gallant fellow, W. H. Kendal, so young and romantic, so tender-hearted with Adam, so easily bamboozled by his lady, as all young lovers are. In those days Henry Howe, who lived to be a beloved veteran, was, I suppose, no older than I am now, but I don't think he was much more than a workmanlike Jaques: certainly he had not the touch of erratic genius which Tree threw into the part about thirty years later. There were other people who stand out in my memory: that dear creature Lionel Brough, who made Le Beau, without a touch of exaggeration, like the quaint courtiers of ambling gait and superfluity of courtliness that one reads about in Hans Andersen or the Brothers Grimm: that most thoroughly workmanlike actor W. H. Stephens (whom I afterwards saw as the Vicar of Wakefield and as Mawworm), a pathetic yet natural Adam: Charles Sugden, a quite idyllic shepherd Sylvius: Edward Righton, glorious vulgar little creature, who simply

revelled in Touchstone, and W. J. Hill, not yet as famous as he became, a purely precious William. Ah! those two with Mrs. Chippendale as Audrey : I do not need to look at my programme to remember them, or the passages about the ill-roasted egg, or 'a poor thing, sir, but mine own,' or 'the truest poetry is the most feigning' (and Sir Sidney Lee actually quotes this as representing Shakespeare's own opinion !), or the scurvy treatment of poor Sir Oliver Martext, for whom as a much tormented parson I have great sympathy, for ne'er a fantastical knave of them all shall flout me out of my calling. And then over it all was that delightful open-air feeling which Shakespeare has so wonderfully sprinkled over the whole play ; and the songs to make it all still more in tune with sweetness, the charming old music, 'What shall he have that killed the deer ?' 'Blow, blow, thou Winter Wind' and 'Under the Greenwood Tree' (who was Mr. Nordblom, who sang them ?), the delightful Hymen's song at the end, and even the interpolated Cuckoo song which one could almost forgive because Mrs. Kendal sang it—and, dear me, how shameless, was made to sing it again. There could not be a better introduction for a boy to the charm of the Shakespearean stage. It was the second play I ever saw : and from that day I determined to see acted every play that Shakespeare wrote. It has taken a long time, but for a long time money and opportunities were scarce, and now age with his stealing steps has clawed me in his clutch and I may never see the one I still lack as though I had ne'er been such.

I think the next play I saw was also at the Crystal Palace in May 1875 : *Twelfth Night*. And I have often seen it since. It certainly ranks with *As You Like It* as unfailingly popular : and that is a good division among the plays, those which everybody enjoys, and those which need a certain dramatic or literary education to enable one to appreciate them. I have never found anyone who did not enjoy *Twelfth Night* on the stage, from the grimdest college don to the child from Christ's Hospital who delighted in Malvolio's yellow stockings. It is a play which acts itself. When I saw it in 1875 there was Mr. Osmond Tearle as the duke, the tones of whose beautiful voice I can still recall as he said :

' If music be the food of love, play on ;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again ! it had a dying fall :

O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour! Enough; no more:
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.'

Those lovely lines are the note that gives the key for the whole play, and for all the boisterous fun in it. There is always the glamour of soft music over it all. In 1875 there was Miss Carlisle as Viola: 'pleasant, tender, and touching' I thought her when I was a boy; and her brother Sebastian was Mr. Garthorn, who was really a Grimston and Mr. Kendal's brother, a handsome gallant fellow. I have still a photograph of Miss Rachel Sanger who acted Maria, and very pretty she was: more of a maid-servant than a lady-in-waiting she made the character, but very delightful. The four 'humours' who surrounded her were the joy of that performance. Lionel Brough quite perfect as Sir Toby: not too much of a sot to be a wit, or too lethargic to be pugnacious, he enjoyed the part infectiously; and that quaint little creature Harry Paulton was delicious as Sir Andrew: 'An I thought he had been valiant and so cunning in fence——': 'I had rather than forty pound I were at home.' And the contrast in the tall lugubrious-looking Charles Collette as Feste, who entered into all the fun in the highest spirits but with a melancholy protesting face. Alas! he was not a Latinist: I can still remember his "Cucullus non facit mo-nack-um" (as he pronounced it) with a shudder. Nor could he sing; so one lost those most exquisite things, 'Come away death' and 'O mistress mine.' I think W. H. Vernon must have been just the traditional Malvolio, and I am inclined to believe that there can be no better way of playing the part; so Tree took it, with the touches of eccentric genius which came naturally to him; and so Benson also. But Irving quite marred it by making the pompous steward, even when cross-gartered and wearing yellow stockings, a knight of the sorrowful countenance. Tree seemed to live into the part, Irving to have taken it as an old portrait of dignity down from the wall. So the chaff of the Clown when Malvolio was shut up in the dark room was delightful when Vernon, and when Benson and when Tree, was Malvolio: it was almost tear-provoking when the sad voice of Irving was heard from behind the curtain. But of course Ellen Terry was glorious as Viola. It belongs to the class of her purely beautiful parts, where poetry predominates: and yet she did not lose any touch

of fun: 'Excellent well, if God did all:' or 'I am the man:' the little twinkle which gently made the point.

No Viola that I have seen surpasses Ellen Terry, no Malvolio equalled Tree: and yet I have seen the Bensons too (he enjoyed the quaintnesses of Malvolio), and others.

As I began with the comedies, perhaps I had best take up my Shakespeare and go on with them, leaving the chronological order of my seeing them acted, for that, after the first youthful excitement is over, hardly matters. Who were the actors one saw, and what does one remember about them, in the half-century of change?

I always regret that Irving did not act Prospero; and what an exquisite Miranda Ellen Terry would have made. But to have seen *The Tempest* with Tree, and with Benson, is not lightly to be regarded. Lionel Brough, I feel pretty sure, I have seen as Trinculo: almost happy enough to make one friendly with the creature. And Viola Tree surely was Ariel, a vision of grace. Certainly Frank Benson making Caliban an athlete, though a very horrible one, is not to be forgotten. *The Tempest* indeed is another of those plays which almost act themselves; and it will bear very beautiful staging; and yet it does not fall within the charmed circle of those which every age and class can enjoy. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* I have seen very happily acted by the Oxford Dramatic Society, who enjoyed themselves thoroughly, except the Proteus who divested his part of all expression, saying 'I am overwhelmed with shame and confusion' in a flat voice which evoked peals of joy from the audience, as did the saying of the chief bandit, whose companions were, off the stage, scions of nobility, of Eton, or Magdalen, 'Some of us are gentlemen.' And also there was the company of Miss Lilian Baylis, *clarum* but yet far from *venerabile nomen*, at Stratford-on-Avon in 1916, with Mr. Russell Thorndike quite delicious as Launce, and Mr. Ion Swinley a Proteus who never quite lost your sympathy, and succeeded in that most difficult task of making you really believe in his repentance; which Shakespeare certainly did hurry unconsciously. Miss Sybil Thorndike too as Julia, already showing herself a great actress. What a beautiful play it is: never can one forget

'O, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away!'

Sunshine and woodland, yet not too ethereal for actors. And the woodland scenes link it to the last act of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which Tree staged so splendidly. His own Falstaff was perhaps a little overdone ; one remembers W. S. Gilbert's 'Ah ! Tree, how beautifully *your skin* acts' ; but he enjoyed the part, and so did we. Never were two such merry wives as Mrs. Kendal and Miss Ellen Terry. It was an education to see them playing up to one another. Such acting drives out of the mind the memory of all other performers in the play, and yet I have seen that steady old humorist George Weir as Falstaff, Mr. H. Herbert as Shallow, Mr. H. O. Nicholson a quite perfect Slender, and some really delicious fun in Sir Hugh Evans (Mr. Arthur Whitby) and in Dr. Caius Sir Frank Benson himself.

It is the fashion nowadays to disparage *The Merry Wives* as a play into which Shakespeare did not put his strength ; but really there are no better humours to be found on the Shakespearean stage than Sir Hugh and the doctor, and dear Master Slender waiting for sweet Anne Page to bid him come in to dinner. So this comedy, which is really a farce, has kept its popularity all through the fifty years I remember. How different is the grim anguish of *Measure for Measure*, like Holbein (as Ruskin says) 'keeping step with the sad melody of death.' A comedy, because it ends happily, and yet there is tragedy, revolting and unhidden by the coarse humour, brooding over it all. It brings to me the memory of the radiant Adelaide Neilson, as long ago as 1878 ; exquisitely beautiful, with a voice of poignant appeal. I can see the scene in the prison, with Kyrle Bellew as Claudio, still ; a thrill of absorbing pathos.

It is a play of strange and persistent contrast : high tragic poetry and low sordid humour.

'Take, O, take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn,'

and then 'Wild Half-can that stabbed Pots, and, I think, forty more.'

So on the one side there was the rich entrancing beauty of Miss Neilson, with her deep tones of passion or appeal, and on the other the ripe enjoyment in the voice of David Fisher the younger, as Pompey. In those days when I saw the play, playgoers were much more easily shocked than they are now : I remember a 'lady' in the stalls at the Crystal Palace interjecting between the sarcasms

of Mrs. Sneerwell, 'Ah ! Ah ! I didn't think they'd 'ave such a thing 'ere' ; but I am quite sure that the moral of *Measure for Measure* (if anyone cares for such a thing nowadays) is as convincing on the stage as it is in the study—perhaps even more so.

Another contrast : as one goes through the plays one is more than ever astonished by the multiplicity of the playwright's power.

The Comedy of Errors. Now that is quite as confusing to see as it is to read. It is, of course, simply a farce, and everything in the acting depends on the two Dromios. In the time long ago that I look back to, J. S. Clarke was the living presentment of them both—at least I think so—and he carried through the whole play in a tempest of fun. Everything depends here upon rapidity : there must be no time, as the play goes on, to stop and think ; and that was managed to perfection by J. S. Clarke and his companions at the old Haymarket. And the Bensonians, too, acted the play with plenty of spirit.

Swiftly we change to *Much Ado About Nothing*, in which almost every playgoer of modern times has seen many a famous actor and actress. It was as Beatrice, at the first night of the Memorial Theatre, on April 23, 1879, that I saw Helen Faucit, for the first and only time. There was other good acting : Barry Sullivan, really a very delightful old Irish gentleman—though for some reason or other he always, to me, suggested Mr. Vincent Crummles—was Benedick ; Edward Compton, an honourable name and an actor, in later days, of eighteenth-century elegance, was Claudio ; Miss Wallis, a delicate charming actress, was Hero ; and the Dogberry, W. H. Stevens, one of those handy men who could do everything well ; but Lady Martin towered over all in her commanding genius. She wore, I remember, a rich pink gown, rather of the style of Queen Victoria in Winterhalter's pictures, and her black hair was brushed over her ears and parted in the middle. She uttered her sharp retorts a little slowly, I thought : when she had said a particularly good thing she walked across the stage and struck an attitude ; but there was no doubt at all about her complete understanding of the character, her sense of its wit, of its depth ('Kill Claudio ! ' gave a shock to the whole theatre). Her method was stately, her style queenly. And delightful it is to think how the great actress enjoyed herself that night. She wrote : ' Every turn of playful harmony, every flash of wit, every thrust of strong feeling told ; and it is a great pleasure to me to think that on that spot and on that occasion I made my last essay to present a living portrait of the Lady Beatrice '

(‘Shakespeare’s Female Characters,’ p. 330). Perhaps not quite the Beatrice a twentieth-century reader imagines, but, it may be, not far away from an Elizabethan one. Yet Ellen Terry was the very antithesis of all this. Astonishingly quick, radiantly sparkling, never for a moment at rest : I am really afraid that Helen Faucit would have thought her vulgar : I even fancy she hints at it in one of her charming studies of Shakespeare’s Heroines. But no one of my generation, and two or three after that, can ever think of Ellen Terry as anything but adorable in Beatrice. She swept Irving, whose fun was inclined to be a little grim, entirely away with her in her unceasing joy : she dwarfed everybody else, good though they were, on the stage : Terriss as Pedro, dear old Sam Johnson as Dogberry, even Forbes Robertson as Claudio. But there is also the memory of the wonderful setting of the play at the Lyceum in 1882 : the beautiful terrace garden, the solemn church, which Forbes Robertson painted in his picture of the crisis where the scene almost touches tragedy. Indeed, it was one of the most perfect productions of Shakespeare that the Lyceum in its great days achieved; better certainly than Tree’s, in which, good though it was, there was a sense of unreality and affectation. There are certain plays of fame which are inseparable from a particular actor or actress, such as *Théodora* from Sarah Bernhardt, *Olivia* from Ellen Terry, *Charles I.* from Sir Henry Irving. And this, to the memory of the individual playgoer at any rate, is true even of Shakespeare. So to me, though I have seen in Sir Frank Benson a good tearing Petruchio, well played up to by his wife, who for so many years stood beside him in all his great ventures, yet to me there never was, or will be, such a glorious and impeccable Katharina as Ada Rehan. All the people in the play are worth good acting, and they generally receive it ; they certainly did both from the Bensonians and the Americans ; though I never understand why stage tradition makes Curtis a woman—a worthy pair Grumio and Curtis. But to make the play go well you must have a real Shrew. And what a Shrew (I do not mean in private life) Ada Rehan was ! How she stamped, and screamed, and finally flopped down upon a chair in the sheer voiceless despair of choking rage ! A ‘real lady’ too : so beautiful, so well mannered (when she liked), so well dressed. If I were to pick out half a dozen great Shakespearean ‘creations,’ hers certainly would be among them. And then turn to the Bensonians, so long ago as 1902, and there linger in the memory many good performances by those who have since risen high in the profession,

and some, alas! are no longer with us : H. O. Nicholson (Gremio), Matheson Lang (Hortensio), Arthur Whitby (Biondello), Harcourt Williams (Lucentio), George Weir (Grumio) are not the only ones.

Then we have *All's Well That Ends Well*, not often acted, but, I am inclined to say, even better on the stage than it is to read. Both Miss Baylis's company and the Bensonians have acted it ; and both very well indeed. I think that Benson's Parolles is one of the best things he ever did ; and he arranged the play most skilfully. Helena, well acted, proves to be a beautiful character. The old Countess (I rather think Geneviève Ward acted her), an important and managing personage, with just those kindly touches that the actress can add. Nothing can really redeem the miserable Bertram, but he can be made a personable creature, and there is no doubt we often meet men like him. I wrote one long critique on the play when the Benson Company acted it, so I will not say more now. The remembrance is one of those which make me long for a permanent theatre in which all the plays of Shakespeare should be acted in turn.

Love's Labour's Lost is a play by itself : a bright fantasy of youth, reproducing at the same time the French Renaissance at its flowering, the loveliness of Ronsard and *La Pleiade*, and the humours of Elizabethan country life, the rustic lads and lasses, the village schoolmaster and parson, the Euphuist courtier a little out at heels. Shakespeare must have known about Ronsard and about Don Quixote too. And the setting is just far enough away to be romantic : Navarre with its memories of crusades against the Moors, its poetic court striving against the glories of a greater kingdom : the Princess of France on the frontier, like the Infanta a century or two later at S. Jean de Luz, where Pierre Loti has fixed the romanticism of the Basques in *Ramuntcho*.

Ronsard died in 1585 : *Love's Labour's Lost* was written, it seems certain, within ten years of his death. It is, no doubt at all, one of the earliest of the plays. In the bright days of Shakespeare's youth was the time, the very time, when in England, as well as in France, young men would be in love, ay, and be sad too, 'only for wantonness.' When they wrote sonnets to their mistress' eyebrow it was after a model that was common to the literature of Europe. When they loved and wrote of love, it was under the sun that shines on country meadows. Now Shakespeare, we believe, knew his Montaigne, and he would know what Montaigne had said of Ronsard and Du Bellay : 'je ne les trouve guère de la perfection ancienne.' To write me love verses trip-

pingly on the tongue : that was the very conceit of the young poet, the first offering for a young patron. And the loves of which the poet must tell must be such as the courtier can hear of without contempt—loves not too serious, and loves of persons in high places. And yet also there may be leave to tell of the loves of country-folk too, but there shall be humour in them : it is not the time when too much sentiment, yet just a little, is wasted on shepherdesses. The young English poet might well, when he told how Love's Labour was Lost on the frontiers of France and Navarre, have had in his mind those very lines that Estienne Pasquier (1529-1615) wrote to his master Ronsard :

‘Tu chantes haut les monarques, les rois
Ceux qui sont nés pour établir leur lois
D'un poids égal sur toutes les provinces.
Quand moi, quittant humblement ces discours
Je chante bas le petit dieu d'amours
Mais petit dieu qui donne loi aux princes.’

But we are not to look, of course, for any direct imitation of Ronsard in the play, or of his circle, and certainly not for plagiarism or direct translation, but rather for a ‘conveying’ of that spirit of *insouciance* which sat so easily on the French courtiers, which English nobles tried somewhat clumsily to assume, and which Shakespeare would show that he could take upon him, if need be, with the best of the poets and the most frivolous of the nobles. Ronsard had written an éloge of Leicester : in his charming verses of 1565 he had sung the union of hearts between France and England, a precursor indeed, as M. Auguste Dorchain has said, of ‘l'entente cordiale.’ Shakespeare would not be lacking in international courtesy a quarter of a century later. He would paint French nobles and princes with all the charm of their gay outlook on life : only things English, Spanish, or German should be laughed at in his play.

The play has been very popular in Germany. It is one of the great debts we owe to Sir Frank Benson that he revived it at Stratford-on-Avon and showed what a brisk and beautiful acting play it made. In Germany, all sorts of pains were taken about the geography and the historical connexions between France and Navarre c. 1585.

There is no more need to investigate the geography of the Bensonian list of scenes than to inquire too closely as to the sea-coast of Bohemia. No doubt Mr. Benson meant, with Shakespeare,

to place all the incidents within the territory of the Navarrese King and in the large extent of his personal domain. He gave no extravagance of decoration ; the scenery had a quiet fitness, and if we did recognise the beautiful view of the Wye that we saw last year from Justice Shallow's orchard, why, we had never fancied that we were going to be in the very Navarre itself, the grim bleak land of Pyrenean strongholds, but in a fanciful country where poets could sing and country constables blunder as they did in Warwickshire lanes when good Queen Elizabeth sat on the throne. It is worth while taking this play, I think, as typical of the whole Bensonian methods.

As to the treatment of the text, it was on the whole eminently conservative. There were of course omissions, but they were, it seemed, for the sake of necessary compression, and hardly anything was left out that could be seriously missed. Sir Frank Benson left out a good deal of Biron's long speech of seventy-six lines : and perhaps a stern critic would not justify him, for it is a delightful speech, and in the true spirit of the Pleiad. But he had, clearly, a great difficulty in becoming letter-perfect in his part. He may well have dreaded this tremendous oration, for he does not very often—and there must be every allowance for a manager on the first night—speak his lines correctly. It may sound strange to say it—and yet no one can study the actor without seeing that it is true—that Sir F. Benson throws himself so heartily into the part he plays that the words he says come spontaneously to his lips. He speaks the speeches from the character, rather than plays the character from the speeches. It is a circumstance which has its dangers, for after all there are few actors who can improve on Shakespeare, even if it be not their first business to respect his text ; and it is a tendency which needs to be sternly checked or it will inevitably react on the whole performance. All through the play, on the first night of the Stratford performance, there was much to complain of in this respect. A small instance will suffice : Says Biron to Rosaline, when he is dressed as a 'Muscovite' :

‘ Vouchsafe to show the sunshine of your face,
That we, like savages, many worship it.’

And she answers :

‘ My face is but a moon and clouded too.’

But the point of the little conceit was lost because Sir F. Benson

said not 'the sunshine' but 'the beauty of your face.' There was much, I say, to complain of; but there was a great deal more to accept with pleasure. Sir Frank's conception of Biron was as delightful as true. Here was the mercurial gallant, the courtly soldier with a strong vein of genuine poetry in him and with that delightful humour which sees the humour in incidents even that tell against himself. There was abundance of spirit, almost boyish spirit, but also there was the subtle quality of charm.

It would hardly be possible to praise the performance too highly. It set the tone of the poetic side of the play, and the other actors caught it: Lady Benson brightly as Rosaline, Miss Helen Haye gracefully as the Princess, Mr. Clarence Derwent royally as the King, the other ladies and gentlemen very fitly too, and Boyet (Mr. H. O. Nicholson) with just that deference which belongs to a character that the author clearly loved in the writing. All the purely poetic side of the play was acted delightfully, with the lightness that it needed, and so the note of passion at the end came with just that shock it was meant to have. Happily the Bensons did not make the German mistake of leaving out the charming songs to which Arne's sweet melodies accord so tunefully. He added to them a mask of pretty dances, the seasons fitting themselves to the songs, a little too elaborately perhaps, but still a very graceful ending, and one that, were it a little pruned, would leave exactly the right impression of delicate fancy.

But there are the humours of the play. How easy it would be to exaggerate them and to mar the unity of the whole comedy by setting beside the clear poetry the broad lines of farce. Now this is just what Sir Frank Benson's skill entirely avoided. If all his players had not then the sense of blank verse—and indeed they marred not a few lines in their saying them—they had every one of them the sense of fitness which prevents Shakespearean wit being turned into buffoonery. Mr. George Weir was quite admirable as Costard. He hit the combination of shrewd humour, ignorance and puzzlement, unerringly. There was not a trace of exaggeration, but every speech told. So too Holofernes (Mr. Han-nam-Clark) and Sir Nathaniel (Mr. Percy Owen) were in excellent keeping, and just the men, one felt, that Shakespeare knew—the masterful insistent pedagogue primed with self-conceit, and the dear, timid, courteous, simple old country parson. Jaquenetta perhaps was a little exaggerated, but as Moth Miss Leah Han-nam did really as much as a lady could with a part which was

written for a lad, and in which every line speaks the clever, quick, and very impudent boy. And the matchless Don Adriano? Certainly Mr. Edward A. Warburton scored a complete triumph. He gave the combination of literary pedantic affected Euphuism with hot temper, the first an assumption which the character puts on and enjoys, the second the natural man breaking out in his nervous irritability, with quite extraordinary skill. One might have fancied that a modern English audience would not have appreciated the humour of this most perfect of all Shakespeare's caricatures of contemporary life, but Mr. Warburton was so clear, so true, so delightfully quaint and spirited and natural, that they saw the very man the poet had in his mind, and welcomed the picture with enthusiasm. There could not have been a happier bit of acting. It set the seal on the success of a performance that did honour to a company who in honouring Shakespeare won the freshest laurels for themselves.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is as constantly, as *Love's Labour's Lost* is rarely, acted. The bewilderment of the different lovers certainly spreads across the footlights to the audience, but there are the delicious fairies and the inimitable clowns to make up for it. Sir Herbert Tree was as much in his element as Bottom as he was when he acted Malvolio. Indomitable self-sufficiency and untiring energy were stamped on each feature and each movement, and the little touches of by-play were often fresh and original. Lady Tree, I think, was Titania; Miss Freear was much the best Puck I have seen: a veritable imp of mischief. *The Midsummer Night's Dream* is a play which gains by a beautiful staging, and that was given at His Majesty's; and by Mendelssohn's music—it is a pity this is ever superseded. Mr. Bridges-Adams's Company has also done the play at Stratford, in 1921, when among the performers were some who have since risen high in the profession: Mr. Balliol Holloway as good a Bottom as could be, an actor the variety of whose powers recall the training of the old stock-companies long passed away; and Miss Dorothy Green an actress who, even then, approached near to genius. Eighteen years before, the play was acted at Stratford by the Bensons. The two lovers were Frank Benson himself and Cyril Keightley, and George Weir was a slow, solemn, befogged Bottom, very funny in an old Scots way, utterly unlike the ebullience of Tree. Puck, I remember, poor creature, was overweighted; and Miss Dorothy Green made what must surely have been a first appearance. The clowns were all well played: no wonder, since among them were Mr. G. Hannam-

Clark and Mr. H. O. Nicholson. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a delightful play for children at Christmas ; they are impressed by the beauty and happy in the absurdities. The ass's head never fails : but no one in my time made it fit so well as Tree.

Now, if we follow the 'Globe,' we come to what is perhaps the best-known play of all—*The Merchant of Venice*. It seems strange, but I really don't believe I ever saw Tree as Shylock, but three really great actors I did see—Phelps, Irving, and Maurice Moscovitch. I suppose the present generation, and the last too, will think me fatuous, but I put Phelps's Shylock highest of the three. It was on January 22, 1876, that I saw him, at the Gaiety, of all places. It was no doubt rather a scratch company, but there were giants in it. Johnston Forbes-Robertson, who is certainly the most attractive and really beautiful actor of my time, was Antonio, dignified, pathetic, manly, with that exquisite voice of his which retains to the highest poetry its richest charm ; W. H. Leigh—I might often have mentioned him already—and E. Cooper, quite good as Launcelot and Old Gobbo ; Miss Rose Leclercq, a thoroughly good actor's actress, was a pleasant Portia, but robbed of the beauty of the last act. The scenery was nothing, the dresses nothing. There was nothing to distract from the play, and the play with Phelps really was Shylock. I have no doubt that the tradition Macklin began, or revived, was right ; I think that Pope, if he had seen Phelps, would again have cried :

‘ This is the Jew
That Shakespeare drew.’

He was bitter, forceful, direct, yet he left no 'point' neglected : the recapitulation of racial wrongs to Antonio ; the passionate attachment to Jessica and the memory of Leah ; the cunning avarice with Tubal ; the blaze of power in 'If you wrong us shall we not revenge ?' ; the cold vindictiveness of the scene with Antonio and his gaoler ; and in the fourth act the feverish keenness for his enemy's blood, the fierce light in the eyes as he sharpened his knife on his shoe ; the inflexible stern purpose set against mercy ; the hypocritical tone of 'my oath in heaven' ; and, at the end, the sudden collapse into desperate illness, with the benumbed faculties, with a voice hardly forcing its way to audibility—these made a coherent Shylock to whom, as Shakespeare certainly meant, no sympathy could be extended. Irving's Shylock was very different. He was the noble scion of an ancient and sacred race, speaking for an oppressed people whom, in his own person, he was determined to

avenge. All through, no possible opportunity to claim sympathy was lost. He was pathetic, noble, a seeker for justice, a contemptuous scorner of the tiny creatures among whom he lived. The highest point was the agony of the discovery of Jessica's flight. The brightest, most human and sympathetic, were the scenes with Launcelot Gobbo. And the last moment, the end, was utterly unlike Phelps's collapse—defeat it was, but, as *The Spectator* wrote when the play was produced in 1880, with a 'glance of ineffable, unfathomable contempt.' Now surely this was all wrong. The beauty of the fifth act, the lyrical loveliness of the lines of Lorenzo and Jessica; the happy quips of Portia and Nerissa, become harsh, cruel, tuneless, if Shylock is the hero whom base groundlings have overcome. Indeed only the exquisite charm of Ellen Terry in every tone and gesture could have carried the play through at the Lyceum: but for her it would have been a tragedy, not a comedy. But her Portia is an unforgettable memory. It had all the fresh naturalness of her Beatrice or her Viola; one cannot forget the discriminating skill of her treatment of the three casket scenes; and the beautiful 'Mercy' speech ceased to be hackneyed as it came freshly from her lips. There was other good acting, and Sir Arthur Pinero may remember, as his admirers do, the pungency of his Salarino; there were the extraordinarily beautiful pictures of Venice; but it was the genius of Irving, mistaken though its expression seems to me, and the humanity of Ellen Terry, which turned this almost too familiar play into a great success.

New renderings of Shakespeare's characters are hardly possible. Surely the traditions of his time, the unbroken succession of the stage, cannot have left the main meaning of a character unexplored. It was in the old tradition that Maurice Moscovitch made Shylock live again only the other day: forceful, bitter, ingrainedly racial, a real Jewish Shylock with none of the unpleasant traits left out. Yet he does not touch Irving or Phelps.

New renderings of a character seem impossible; how about new readings? I do not think they belong to the province of the actor. 'The air bites shrewdly: is it very cold?' really verges on the absurd. 'A little more than kin and less than kind' too is affectation. Nor, in spite of the First Folio, can I be content with 'Hang up our banners on the outward walls. The cry is still, They come.' The actor had better not try to rewrite the text. Nor do I think he should try to react upon the written Malvolio or the written Shylock.

(To be continued.)

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE sixth series of Literary Acrostics begins with No. 21, printed below, and will run for four months. Prizes to the value of at least £3 will be awarded to the most successful solvers. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number; the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is first opened.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 21.

(*The First of the Series.*)

'Come unto these yellow ———,
And then take ——— :
Court'sied when you have, and kiss'd,
The wild waves whist.'

1. 'Here's a ——— to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate ;
And, whate'er sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.'
2. 'From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.'
3. 'From morn
To ——— he fell, from ——— to dewy eve,
A summer's day.'
4. 'Was there a man ——— ?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd.'
5. 'Why dost thou stay, and turn away ?
Here lies the road to Rome.'

RULES.

- Only one answer may be sent to each light.
- Every correct light and upright will score one point.
- With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed above 'Book-Notes' on a later page.
- At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.
- Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
- Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
- Answers to Acrostic No. 21 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than November 20.

POEM : *Shakespeare, Twelfth Night*, ii. 4.

LIGHTS :

- Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Introduction to the Second Part.
- Congreve, *The Mourning Bride*, i. 1.
- Macaulay, *The Battle of the Lake Regillus*, xl.
- Stevenson, *Memories and Portraits. Talk and Talkers*, i.
- Emerson, *Miscellaneous Pieces. The Sovereignty of Ethics*.
- Moore, *Alciphron*, Letter 5.
- Aytoun, *The Refusal of Charon*.
- Scott, *Rob Roy*, ch. 16.

ANSWER TO NO. 20.

1. P	ilgri	M
2. A	lphones	O
3. T	wi	N
4. I	mprompt	U
5. E	quilibriu	M
6. N	onsens	E
7. C	haro	N
8. E	claircissement	T

Acrostic No. 19 ('Swallow Skylark') : Solutions were received from 263 solvers ; of these 15 were correct and 241 were partly correct, and the other 7 infringed one or other of the rules. A great number of competitors missed one light only : generally, it was the first one, but the third, fifth, sixth and seventh all caused many failures. It was surprising how many solvers did not recollect Hood's lines, and sent 'Week' for the last light.

The first answer that was opened and proved to be correct came from 'Mahatma,' and he wins the monthly prize. Books to the value of £1 may be chosen from Mr. Murray's catalogue by Rev. F. V. Keating, The Presbytery, Lowgate, Clitheroe, Lancs. In view of the fact that this competitor has already taken prizes in our competitions, and that No. 19 proved such a destructive acrostic, a consolation prize is awarded to 'Penthemeron,' the sender of the correct answer next opened. Miss Wait, 2 College Road, Clifton, Bristol, is also invited to choose books to the value of £1.

Of late several solvers have been sending in two answers, one of them correcting the other. When the final one carries a statement that it is meant to cancel the other, all is well ; the A.E. can destroy the one not wanted. But in many cases no clue appears as to which of two answers is to be taken as final ; solvers must then not complain if the A.E., in his ignorance, chooses the wrong one. The addition of the words, 'Second thoughts,' would remove all uncertainty.

Competitors are requested not to send pins, clips, or other paper fasteners with their coupons. A half sheet of notepaper is best for answers ; flimsy paper and big sheets are both undesirable.

